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THE

WORKS

OF

The late Reverend

JAMES HERVEY, A. M.

Rector of Weſton-Favell, in Northamptonſhire.

VOLUME V.

CONTAINING

His FIVE SERMONS,

MISCELLANEOUS TRACTS,

AND

PART OF HIS LETTERS.

We preach Chriſt crucified;—Chriſt the power of God, and the wiſdom of God. 1 Cor. i. 23, 24.

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THE

TIME OF DANGER,

THE

MEANS OF SAFETY,

AND THE

WAY OF HOLINESS.

Being the

Substance of THREE SERMONS

Preached on the late public FAST-DAYS.

PREFACE.

SHOULD any one ask, "Why does this author "publish his sermons, when the fast is *gone* and "*forgotten?*"—For this very reason he publishes, that the fast, though gone, may not be forgotten; that we may remember the sins we confessed, and the miseries we deprecated; remember the vows of GOD, which are still upon us; and the snares of death, which are still around us.

Should it be further asked, "Why does he obtrude

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" himself on the public, when so many *eminent* wri-
" ters have already made their appearance? Does
" he bring with him any distinguished excellency of
" composition, any superior force of argument, or
" uncommon delicacy of sentiment?" No such thing. He pretends to nothing refined or extraordinary: he affects neither brilliant thought, nor polished style: equally remote from nice criticism and profound learning, his discourses are studiously *plain*, and brought down to the level of the meanest capacity.

" What then is his motive?"—This is the very truth. In several of the sermons published on this occasion, the *one thing needful* seems to be overlooked. CHRIST and his free grace, CHRIST and his great salvation, are either totally omitted, or but slightly touched. Where these are but slightly touched, the door of hope and the city of refuge are shewn, as it were, through a mist, dimly and indistinctly. We have no more than a transient glimpse of the desirable objects; and only so much light as is sufficient to bewilder, rather than direct.—Where they are totally omitted, the door of hope is barred, and the city of refuge withdrawn from our view. In this case, being without CHRIST, we are without consolation; and may justly complain, with the mourning prophet, *the Comforter, that should relieve our souls, is far off.*

Through the following discourses, a constant regard is paid to *the redemption which is in CHRIST JESUS;* to his all-atoning blood, and his everlasting righteousness; which are the grand means, both of comforting our hearts, and sanctifying our nature.—Indeed the principal aim of the whole is, to display the unsearchable riches of CHRIST, the matchless efficacy of his death, and that perfect freeness with which all his invaluable benefits are bestowed.—*To those who believe he is precious;* and to those who are convinced of sin, these salutary truths will be their own best recommendation. Such readers will excuse a

multitude

multitude of blemiſhes, provided they find JESUS who was crucified; JESUS, who is the deſire of all nations; JESUS, than whom no other foundation can be laid, either for preſent holineſs, or future happineſs.

As theſe ſermons were not preached to gratify a *curious* taſte, neither are they publiſhed with any fond proſpect of reforming a *ſinful* nation. Sincerely as the author loves his country, and ardently as he deſires the ſalvation of his countrymen, he is not ſo vainly ſanguine in his expectations.—But this he will venture to aſſert, that, if ever a reformation is produced, it muſt, under the influences of the eternal SPIRIT, be produced by the doctrines of free grace, and juſtification through a REDEEMER's righteouſneſs. Till theſe doctrines are generally inculcated, the moſt eloquent harangues from the pulpit, or the moſt correct diſſertations from the preſs, will be no better than a pointleſs arrow, and a broken bow.

This alſo he will venture to hope, that the diſcourſes may here and there meet with ſome poor ſinner who is ſmitten with a ſenſe of guilt, and alarmed with apprehenſions of danger; who deſires nothing ſo much as to find a reſting-place, where he may be free from the terrors of conſcience, and ſafe in the day of trouble. This freedom and this ſafety are to be found *only*, are to be found *infallibly*, in the bleſſed JESUS and the blood of ſprinkling. If ſuch a reader, by the following pages, is conducted to this divine ſanctuary, the writer is ſatisfied, is rewarded, enjoys the utmoſt of his wiſhes.

Then, inſtead of ſoliciting the voice of fame, or coveting the wreath of honour; inſtead of giving himſelf any concern about the *officious* critic; he will thankfully adore that almighty hand which *confirmeth the word of his ſervant, and performeth the counſel of his meſſengers* *. For, oh! how inſipid is the praiſe of men,

* Iſ. xliv. 26.

men, compared with the exalted pleaſure of glorifying GOD, and edifying an immortal ſoul! How harmleſs is defamation from a fellow-creature, when our great CREATOR ſmiles; and is pleaſed by *weak things, and by things that are deſpiſed* *, to accompliſh the purpoſes of his infinite grace and everlaſting love!

* 1 Cor. i. 27, 28.

SER-

SERMON I.

The Time of Danger.

HEB. xi. 28.

Through faith he kept the paſſover, and the ſprinkling of blood, leſt he that deſtroyed the firſt-born, ſhould touch them.

IF we conſult the hiſtory to which theſe words refer, we ſhall find the Iſraelites in a ſtate of great affliction. The Egyptians oppreſſed them; very heavily laid the yoke upon them; and made their *lives bitter with hard bondage.*—The miſery of his people GOD pities, and is reſolved to redreſs. Accordingly he ſends Moſes, in the quality of his ambaſſador, to demand their releaſe. The king of Egypt moſt inſolently replies, *Who is the LORD, that I ſhould obey his voice, to let Iſrael go? I know not the LORD, neither will I let Iſrael go.* GOD, to chaſtiſe his inſolence and obſtinacy, inflicts a variety of plagues on him and his ſubjects: in contempt of all which Pharaoh hardens his heart, perſiſts in his diſobedience; and refuſes to *let the people go.*—At laſt, ſays the LORD, *I will bring one plague more upon Pharaoh and upon Egypt* *; which ſhall infallibly accompliſh my purpoſe. Be their hearts hard as the nether millſtone,

* Exod. xi. 1.

millſtone, this ſhall make them feel: be their reſolution ſtubborn as an iron ſinew, this ſhall make it bend. *About midnight I will go out into the midſt of Egypt, and all the firſt born in the land of Egypt ſhall die* *.

But as the Iſraelites then dwelt in Egypt, how ſhould they be ſafe amidſt the general deſolation?—Will it be ſaid, the Iſraelites, being the people of GOD, were not expoſed to this puniſhment; had no reaſon to fear the infliction of this vengeance? None, that remembers how all the world is become guilty before GOD, will affirm this; none, that conſiders how rebellious and idolatrous the Iſraelites were, can ſuppoſe this. And every one who has read Ezek. xx. 8. † muſt allow, that there was no difference in this reſpect. The one people were criminal, as well as the other. All of them moſt righteouſly deſerved the afflictive ſtroke. Grace, free and ſovereign grace alone, muſt make the diſtinction.

Since this was the caſe, it may reaſonably be aſked, How ſhall the Iſraelites be ſafe?—The LORD himſelf directs Moſes to a method, which ſhould effectually ſecure all the families of Iſrael, while death entered into every habitation of the Egyptians. The method—its execution—and ſucceſs—are all ſpecified in the text. *By faith Moſes kept the paſſover, and the ſprinkling of blood, leſt he that deſtroyed the firſt-born ſhould touch them.* Where we may obſerve,

I. A very dreadful danger; ſignified by *the deſtruction of the firſt-born.*

II. A method of ſecurity from this danger; effected by *keeping the paſſover, and the blood of ſprinkling.*

III. The ſucceſs of this method; denoted by the deſtroyer *not ſo much as touching them.*

The

* Exod. xi. 4, 5.

† *But they rebelled againſt me, and would not hearken unto me: they did not, every man, caſt away the abominations of his eyes, neither did they forſake the idols of Egypt. Then I ſaid, I will pour out my fury upon them, to accompliſh mine anger againſt them, in the midſt of the land of Egypt.*

The good LORD enable us to open and apply the words, thus divided! Then we shall see their suitableness to the present occasion; and, I hope, feel their salutary influence on our souls.

I. A very dreadful danger; signified by *the destruction of the first-born*. The LORD had already put his hand to the sword. It was even now drawn from the scabbard, and had received a commission to go forth; to go forth that very night; to walk through all the land of Egypt; and to be bathed, before the morning-light, in the blood of the first-born, all the first-born, from the haughty king that sat on the throne, even to the slave that toiled at the mill, and the very sheep that yeaned in the field.—Tremendous, as well as inevitable blow! O what an alarm will it create, and what affliction will it spread! make every heart sad, and every house a scene of mourning! *There shall be a great cry throughout all the land of Egypt, such as there was none like it, nor shall be like it any more* *.

And is not the present time a time of imminent danger? are not the judgments of the Almighty *now* abroad in the world? have not earthquakes shaken kingdoms, and rent the foundations of nature? have they not spread terror through our own and distant nations; laid wealthy towns and magnificent cities in ruin; and swallowed up or destroyed unknown multitudes of our fellow-creatures?

Is not the sword of slaughter drawn? has not war hung out her bloody flag? are not the flames kindled in Europe and America; on the land and on the ocean! are they not gathering strength daily; spreading their rage continually; and threatening to overrun all?

If we were evidently superior to our enemies in number and power, in vigilance and unanimity; yet the

* Exod. xi. 6.

the events of military undertakings are very uncertain. *The battle is not always to the ſtrong* *. Succeſs and victory depend upon a hand higher far than the arm of fleſh. *Without me*, ſaith the LORD, *they ſhall bow down under the priſoners, and they ſhall fall under the ſlain* †.

But are we not at war with one of the moſt potent, inſidious, enterpriſing kingdoms in the world? is there not great reaſon to ſuppoſe, that they will ſoon be joined by their neighbours the Spaniards? And, if we have been worſted by one, how ſhall we contend with their united force?—Conſidering the ſituation and behaviour of the ungrateful Auſtrians, have we not cauſe to ſuſpect the junction of a third Popiſh power againſt our religion and liberty? will not the court of Rome, with all her bigotted adherents, urge and inſtigate them to be active in this confederacy ‡? will they not at this juncture,—the moſt favourable for the proſecution of their purpoſe that any age has afforded, or their own ſanguine zeal can deſire;—will they not exert their utmoſt ability to cruſh the Proteſtant cauſe, and extirpate the Proteſtant name ‖?

Should

* Eccleſ. ix. 11. † Iſ. x. 4.

‡ I am informed, that when the Pope heard of the alliance lately eſtabliſhed between the houſes of Bourbon and Auſtria, Hungary and Bohemia, ſtrengthened by the unexpected acceſſion of Ruſſia, he cried out, with an air of triumph, *O admirabile commercium generis humani!* "Admirable aſſociation and intercourſe of mankind!" promiſing himſelf, I ſuppoſe, from this remarkable turn of affairs, ſuch advantages to the cauſe and intereſts of Popery as exceeded even all his hopes.

‖ The French and Auſtrian miniſters, it ſeems, have long been concerting meaſures to tear up the reformed religion by the roots, and not to leave a Proteſtant upon the face of the earth. This execrable plot is diſcovered by the ſagacity and activity of the king of Pruſſia; is averred and proved, in the memorials lately publiſhed by his Majeſty. If that hero and his army ſhould fall before their enemies, what can hinder the execution of this horrid deſign? It may puzzle the acuteſt politician to aſſign any *human* means, ſufficient to ſtand as a barrier.

Should the enemy make a deſcent upon our iſland, what can we expect, but that our iſland be turned into a field of blood? They, who have always been jealous of our intereſt and influence, have now added rage to their jealouſy. Their reſentment, like the burning fiery furnace, is heated ſeven times hotter than uſual. We ſhould certainly find them, as the ſcripture ſpeaks, *a bitter and haſty nation* *; and, without the ſpirit of prophecy, may venture to declare, Wo be to England, if GOD ſhould now deliver it into the hands of the French.

Some, perhaps, may cry, "Theſe fears are all chimerical. There is no ground for ſuch diſcouraging ſuggeſtions. We don't queſtion but we ſhall be a match, and more than a match for our adverſaries."—To this confident boaſting let not my tongue, but let the courſe of events, let the diſpoſals of Providence reply.—Have we, then, been ſuperior in the day of trial? Alas! have we not loſt Minorca? is not Oſwego gone? a general ſlain, and his army cut in pieces? an admiral condemned to be ſhot to death, and his fleet defeated by an inferior number of the enemy's ſhips? Are not ravages and depredations made almoſt continually upon our colonies in America; and horrible, unheard-of cruelties committed by the ſavages, on the perſons of our fellow-ſubjects? What have we reaped from the late campaign, but diſappointment, loſs, and ſhame?

Are not all theſe things apparently againſt us? will they not diſpirit our men and embolden our foes? will they not make our allies backward to come in with their ſuccours, and render the powers that are unengaged afraid to declare themſelves on our ſide?

All theſe circumſtances conſidered, the preſent time appears to be a time of uncommon danger: affairs, look where-ever we will, wear a louring aſpect. *Our ſky is black with clouds, and there is the ſound of abun-*

* Hab. i. 6.

dance of rain *. Judgments ſeem, more than ſeem, to be hovering all around us. How ſoon they may fall, GOD only knows!

If GOD indeed *were for us*, we might truſt, and not be afraid; we might look danger in the face, and boldly ſay, *Who ſhall be againſt us* †?—But is this the caſe? are we *a righteous nation, that keepeth the truth* ‡? is there ſufficient reaſon to believe, that the holy One of Iſrael is our defence?—Are we not, on the contrary, a ſinful generation, a people laden with iniquity? is there not abundant reaſon to fear, leſt our GOD ſhould ſay, in terrible indignation, *They are joined to idols, let them alone* ‖?—In order to determine this point, let us examine our ways. Nothing can be more proper for a day of humiliation. Are not we, like the Egyptians, in a ſtate of great danger? If we conſider,

1. The *ſins* of our nation.

2. The *judgments* of GOD denounced upon ſuch ſins.

3. The *certain execution* of thoſe judgments, unleſs we fly to the appointed refuge.

1. Conſider the ſins of our nation. Here I ſhall mention ſome, and only ſome, of thoſe abominations, which, where-ever they are found, cannot fail to provoke the eyes of GOD's glory, and render either a perſon or a people ripe for his vengeance.

The *Chriſtian ſabbath* is an inеſtimable privilege to the church of *CHRIST*: it is a happy means of building us up in knowledge, of eſtabliſhing us in faith, and preparing us for our everlaſting reſt.—Yet is it not ſhamefully profaned in city and in country? What multitudes waſte it in idleneſs, or ſquander it away in unedifying converſation; making it by far the moſt uſeleſs and contemptible day of the week?—This they do, even though GOD ſtrictly charges, ſaying,

* 1. Kings xviii. 41.
† Rom. viii. 31.
‡ Iſ. xxvi. 2.
‖ Hoſ. iv. 17.

saying, *Remember ye the Sabbath-day*, not barely to abstain from your ordinary works, but *to keep it holy* *; devoting it entirely to holy purposes, and religious exercises.—This they do, even though GOD solemnly threatens, saying, *If ye will not hearken unto me, to hallow the Sabbath-day, then will I kindle a fire in your gates, and it shall devour the palaces of Jerusalem, and it shall not be quenched* †.

Is not the *name of GOD* great, wonderful, and holy? ought it not to be used with the deepest veneration, and magnified above all things? But is it not audaciously dishonoured, and impiously blasphemed? dishonoured by customary and wanton, blasphemed by false and perfidious swearing? Has not the most high GOD declared, that he will in no wise hold such daring wretches guiltless? Yet how do these daring wretches swarm, like the locusts of society, in our polluted land? O England, how is thy air tainted with this breath of the infernal pit! how do thy streets resound, most horribly resound, with this language of hell! And will not the almighty LORD make thee know, —know, by bitter experience, what that meaneth, which is spoken by his prophet? *Because of swearing* the land mourneth ‡; mourneth under afflicting visitations, and desolating judgments.

Is not the *scripture* a singular blessing? Yes; it is celebrated by the Psalmist as the sovereign blessing; that which crowns the other instances of divine goodness: *He sheweth his word unto Jacob, his statutes and ordinances unto Israel.* It is also celebrated as a most distinguishing blessing, from which multitudes are excluded: *He hath not dealt so with all nations, neither have the Heathen knowledge of his laws* ‖. Should not then the scripture be precious to our souls; more precious than fine gold; sweeter also than honey, and the droppings of the honey-comb? should we not exercise ourselves

* Exod. xx. 8. † Jer. xvii. 27.
‡ Jer. xxiii. 10. ‖ Psal. cxlvii. 19, 20.

ourſelves in it day and night * ; reading it by day, meditating on it by night ? ſhould we not make it the moſt delightful ſubject of our converſation ? talk of it to our children, our domeſtics, our neighbours ; when we lie down, and riſe up ; when we walk by the way, and ſit in the houſe† ?—But where are the perſons who bear ſuch a ſuperlative eſteem for the Bible ? where is the company that delights to converſe on thoſe oracles of truth ? where are the parents that diligently inſtruct their children, and feed them with the milk of the word ? Diverſion, of every kind, engages their attention, and the moſt trifling impertinence employs their tongue : but the LORD's word is inſipid, if not irkſome. His word is treated, even by Proteſtants, as the manna was treated by the Iſraelites, who had the ingratitude and impudence to ſay, *Our ſoul loatheth this light bread* ‡. A plague from the LORD of hoſts was the conſequence of their contemptuous treatment of the meat that periſheth. Of how much ſorer puniſhment ſhall we be thought worthy, who contemn the food which endureth to everlaſting life ?

GOD hath reſerved the unjuſt, ſaith the ſcripture, unto the day of judgment, to be puniſhed ; *chiefly thoſe who walk after the fleſh in the luſts of uncleanneſs* ‖. Is not this iniquity rampant among the inhabitants of England ? What lewd pictures are expoſed to view ! what filthy writings are ſuffered to ſee the light ! fewel for luſt, and incentives to debauchery.—What is wit, in our days, but either ſome laſcivious hint, or ſome licentious abuſe of ſcripture ? Are not the wanton entertainments of the ſtage, and other ſeminaries of lewdneſs, countenanced, ſupported, thronged ? Can you acquit our cities and towns of drunkenneſs, revellings, and abominable exceſſes ? Are not theſe, and all ſorts of filthineſs, found in our ſkirts ? If ſo, hear the word of

* Pſal. i. 2. † Deut. vi. 7. ‡ Numb. xxi. 5. ‖ 2 Pet. ii. 10.

of the LORD, and let it sink deep into every heart; *When I had fed them to the full, they then committed adultery and assembled themselves by troops in the harlots houses. They were as fed horses in the morning: every one neighed after his neighbour's wife. Shall I not visit for these things? saith the LORD; and shall not my soul be avenged on such a nation as this* *?

Is not religion, *vital religion*, very much upon the decline? does it not, even among the serious, wear a sickly dying aspect? What multitudes profess to know GOD, but in works deny him; and, quite destitute of the power of godliness, content themselves with the mere form? Whereas, if any, in imitation of the first believers and preachers, are fervent in spirit, serving the LORD with alacrity and zeal; these persons, instead of being encouraged, are opposed; instead of being esteemed, are reproached.—Of such persons even the malignant spirit could bear witness; *These are the servants of the most high GOD, who shew unto us the way of salvation* †. But among us, who call ourselves Christians, who pique ourselves upon being the purest church in Christendom, among us such persons are deemed the visionaries of the age, the disturbers of society, the men that would *turn the world upside down* ‡. —The ministers who are most faithful, and the people who are most exemplary, are a derision and a by-word among their neighbours. Thus, in *Israel, they mocked the messengers of GOD, and despised his words, and misused his prophets*. But it was to the confusion of those scoffers, and the ruin of their country. *For the wrath of the LORD arose against his people, till there was no remedy. Therefore he brought upon them the king of the Chaldees, who slew their young men with the sword, in the house of their sanctuary; and had no compassion upon young man or maiden, old man or him that stooped for age* ‖.

Are

* Jer. v. 7, 8, 9. † Acts xvi. 17. ‡ Acts xvii. 6.
‖ 2 Chron. xxxvi. 16, 17.

Are we not abandoned to a ſpirit of *carnal confidence?* When do we diſcover any reliance on the Almighty, or aſcribe any of our ſucceſs to his gracious interpoſition? It is not GOD, but our ſword, that ſhall help us. Or, if any unſeen power is acknowledged, it is not the LORD of hoſts, but *good fortune.* One would almoſt imagine, that we were aſhamed of a heavenly ally; and thought it a diſgrace to own ourſelves dependent on Omnipotence. Is not ſuch a temper a national infatuation, and the harbinger of national judgments? Zedekiah and the men of Judah forgot or neglected the Rock of their ſalvation, and made Pharaoh's army their confidence. But ſee what was the iſſue, or hear it from the mouth of him who fulfilleth the words of his ſervants; *Tho' he had ſmitten the whole army of the Chaldeans that fight againſt you, and there remained but wounded men among them, yet ſhould they riſe up every man in his tent, and burn this city with fire* *.

Should you ſay, This is a falſe charge: have we not, this very day, publicly acknowledged, that, "without the divine aid, the wiſeſt counſels of frail "men, and the multitude of an hoſt, and all the in- "ſtruments of war, are but weak and vain?" Have we not likewiſe expreſsly declared, that, "not con- "fiding in the ſplendor of any thing that is great, or "the ſtability of any thing that is ſtrong here below, "we do moſt humbly flee to the LORD for ſuccour, "and put our truſt under the ſhadow of his wings †?" I would to GOD we believed *that* acknowledgment, and acted conformably to *this* declaration. We ſhould then be very diligent to propagate religion among our ſoldiers and ſailors; we ſhould ſeek for ſuch officers and commanders, as are men fearing GOD; we ſhould be as deſirous to eſtabliſh our troops in godlineſs,

* Jer. xxxvii. 10.

† The form of prayer appointed for the faſt.

godlineſs, as to train them up in military diſcipline. But is it thus with our army? is it thus with our navy? Viſit a man of war. You will think yourſelf, not in one of the bulwarks of our iſland, but in a little hell. Obſerve the gentlemen of the ſword. Concerning the generality of them you will have reaſon to aſk, Are theſe Chriſtians? are they not incarnate devils *?—And can we expect, that the infinitely-pure GOD will go forth with *ſuch* hoſts? will he not rather become *their enemy, and fight againſt them* †?

What *ignorance* prevails, ſpecially among the lower ranks of people? The groſſeſt ignorance of themſelves, and of GOD our SAVIOUR; the groſſeſt ignorance of grace and ſalvation by a REDEEMER's righteouſneſs; the groſſeſt ignorance of the very firſt principles of our holy religion. To do evil they are wiſe: but to do good, to believe in *JESUS CHRIST*, to love and glorify him who bought ſinners with his blood; to do all, to do any of this, they have no knowledge. And is it a ſmall matter to be thus *children of darkneſs?* is not the ſoul alienated from the life of GOD through ignorance ‡? does not this diſpleaſe the moſt high GOD, and provoke the holy One of Iſrael? Let his own word determine: *It is a people of no underſtanding; therefore he that made them, will not have mercy on them; and he that formed them, will ſhew them no favour* ‖. Are theſe impotent menaces? made only to be contemned? then we may diſmiſs our fears.

But

* Does this ſound harſh? or will any other part of the charge advanced in theſe diſcourſes prove offenſive?—I am ſorry there ſhould be any occaſion for ſuch language. But I dare not retract it; I muſt not ſoften it; no nor apologize for it. Thus much, however, I will very readily acknowledge, borrowing the words of *Job; If it be not ſo now*, let experience *make me a liar, and* in this caſe *make my ſpeech nothing worth*, Job xxiv. 25. Deſirous as I am of ſpeaking truth, here I ſhall rejoice to be convicted of falſehood.

† Iſ. lxiii. 10. ‡ Eph. iv. 18. ‖ Iſ. xxvii. 11.

But if they are the word of GOD, which liveth and abideth for ever; then we have reason to cry, "What "will become of England?"

In a word, religion, both as to knowledge and practice, was never at so low an ebb, since the reformation took place; nor luxury, and immorality of every kind, at such an enormous height.—Where now are our *rulers?* are they zealous for GOD, and valiant for the truth? have they courage to stem the torrent, or to oppose the overflowings of ungodliness? —Where are the grandees and magistrates? warm with generous indignation, do they snatch the spear; and, like the gallant *Phinehas*, smite through the loins of iniquity? Alas! have not our great men *altogether broken the yoke, and burst the bonds* *? are they not, generally speaking, the ringleaders in transgression; as eminent for their contempt of GOD, as for the affluence of their circumstances? *Yea, the hand of the princes and rulers hath been chief in* the several *trespasses* †. But will that dignity, which they have abused; will that authority, which was lent them for better purposes; will those distinctions be a security to them or their country, in the day of visitation?— Hear what the righteous LORD says, who is higher than the highest, and able to execute all his decrees: *It is the sword of the great men that are slain, which entereth into their privy chambers. I have set the point of the sword against all their gates, that their hearts may faint, and their ruins be multiplied* ‡. Gates, be they ever so strongly fortified, or ever so faithfully guarded, are no fence against the point of JEHOVAH's sword. And if sin is suffered to enter, judgments will assuredly follow: judgments will follow even the most powerful and wealthy sinners; will pursue them like an eager blood-hound; will haunt them like a dismal ghost; will force a way into their

* Jer. v. 5. † Ezra ix. 2. ‡ Ezek. xxi. 14, 15.

their palaces, nay into their closest retirements; and never remit the chace, till *fainting of heart* ends in *multiplied ruin;* in the ruin of themselves, their families, their country.

Amidst all these crying evils, are we not *presumptuously secure?* is there not a deplorable spirit of stupidity, which blinds our eyes, and renders us insensible? Scarce any one lays these miseries and dangers to heart. Who mourneth for the abominations of the land? who stirreth up himself to call upon GOD, if so be he may yet be intreated, and have mercy upon Zion?—Are we not too much like the intoxicated sinners of the old world? *They ate, they drank; they bought, they sold; they planted, they builded.* They gave themselves wholly up to sensual gratifications, and inferior cares; disregarding all the admonitions of Noah, and all the tokens of impending vengeance: *till the* divine long-suffering ceased; the universal *flood came; and,* with irresistible violence, *swept them all away* *.—Are we not in the condition of those supine senseless people, spoken of by the prophet Zephaniah? *It shall come to pass at that day, that I will search Jerusalem with candles, and punish the men that are settled upon their lees; that say in their heart, The LORD will not do good, neither will he do evil.* And may we not justly expect their awful doom? *Therefore their goods shall become a booty, and their houses a desolation. Their blood shall be poured out as dust, and their flesh as the dung. Neither their silver nor their gold shall be able to deliver them, in the day of the LORD's wrath; but the whole land shall be devoured by the fire of his jealousy* †.

As a farther aggravation of our crimes, have we not been *incorrigible*, amidst the most compulsive and the most winning motives to amendment?—We have been

* Luke xvii. 27. † Zeph. i. 12. &c.

Tremend'ous threat'ning! *black as night it stands,*
Fierce as ten furies, terrible as hell,
And shakes a dreadful dart; MILTON.

been visited with a *contagious distemper* among our cattle; which, we are apprehensive, might have introduced a plague among the human race. From this fear we have been delivered: but are we delivered from our evil works, and have we renounced all ungodliness?—*Rebellion* broke out in our island; threatning to overthrow our Protestant government, and deprive us of our reformed religion; threatening to deprive us of our liberty and its privileges, of our peace and its comforts. The storm also was soon blown over, and tranquillity restored to our land. But did we return every one to the LORD our GOD, who dealt so graciously with us?—*Earthquakes* have shattered other kingdoms, have destroyed other cities; while they only admonished, not injured, us and ours. Has this goodness, this distinguishing goodness of GOD, led us to repentance?—Were we not lately preserved from the most calamitous of all temporal losses? from losing the *precious fruits* of the earth. When the corn was ripe and ready for the sickle, who can forget the louring sky, and the descending rains, which held back the husbandman's hand, and forbade the gathering? A few more days of such unseasonable weather had inevitably spoiled the produce of the ground, and destroyed the staff of life. But divine Providence, at the very hour of need, restrained the immoderate showers; bid the sun shine forth with peculiar brightness; and gave us the expected weeks of the harvest; thus rescuing us from famine, perhaps from pestilence, probably from mutiny, certainly from a train of evils, the particulers of which we cannot so much as imagine. But is there not too much ground for the complaint, so pathetically

Even the dart of divine indignation over a guilty land. Yet who is awakened from a state of indolence? who is induced to watch and pray? who falls down at the feet of JEHOVAH, though they see his wrath enkindling, and hear his terrors denounced?

thetically urged, and so frequently repeated, by the prophet; *Though I have done all this for you, yet have ye not returned unto me, saith the LORD* *?

Behold, now, the state of our nation.—Our sins abound, and are grown up to heaven;—sins of every, even the most horrid kind;—sins among all ranks, from the highest to the lowest.—In our sins we persist, though wooed, as it were, with the choicest mercies; though made to smart under various judgments; though threatened with far more afflictive visitations. —And will the great, the mighty, the immortal GOD, always bear with such a people? will he receive the most horrible indignities, and still, still refrain himself? Surely he will awake, as one out of sleep! surely he will say, with a determined indignation, *Ah! I will ease me of mine adversaries, and avenge me of mine enemies* †!—Has he not shewed us evident tokens of his displeasure?. is he not filling all his dispensations with marks of anger? And what, O what may be the end of these beginnings! how doleful, how destructive! unless sovereign grace interpose; bringing us, by faith in the SON of GOD, to unfeigned repentance and newness of life.—Some notion we may form concerning the end of these things by unfolding the second point;

2. The *judgments* of GOD denounced on such sins. —Where such iniquities prevail, we might naturally conclude, that the divine indignation is awakened, and the divine vengeance lingereth not. Is there a GOD? does he behold the children of men? is his nature infinitely pure and holy? Surely then he cannot, he will not suffer the most outrageous violations of his sublime perfections to pass unpunished.—Thus we might argue from the nature of GOD; this we might conjecture from the aspect of things. But we have a more sure word of prophecy; in this word, *the wrath of GOD is revealed against all ungodliness and*

* Amos. iv. 6, 8, 9, 10, 11. † Isa. i. 24.

and unrighteouſneſs of men *. And ſee! in what flaming colours, by what frightful images this wrath is repreſented, theſe judgments are deſcribed.

They are likened to *a lion* rending his prey. The LORD hath been *unto Ephraim as a moth, and unto the houſe of Judah as a worm.* He hath diſpenſed milder corrections; afflicting them in meaſure, and with-holding inferior comforts. His judgments were like a moth fretting the garment, or like a worm corroding the wood. In both which caſes the conſumption creeps, as it were; the waſting operates ſilently, and proceeds ſlowly. Thus the chaſtiſing JEHOVAH acted; giving the people ſpace for recollection, and looking for repentance; but no repentance was produced: they continued irreclaimable, adding ſin to ſin.—Then ſays the LORD, *I will be unto Ephraim as a lion;* which, all fierce and ravenous, ruſhes upon a lonely traveller. I will now come forth, as an incenſed and irreſiſtible adverſary, and be *as a roaring lion to the houſe of Judah. I, even I*, who am omnipotent, *will tear*, will deſtroy them with a mighty hand; *and go away*, ſatiated with ſlaughter and vengeance. *I will take away* both prince and people; I will take away their very place and nation; *and none ſhall* have power to effect, or courage to attempt a *reſcue* †.—If GOD do thus to perverſe and incorrigible *Judah*, why ſhould we imagine that he will deal otherwiſe with perverſe and incorrigible England?

They are deſcribod by a *flood*. *Now therefore behold the LORD bringeth up upon them the waters of the river, ſtrong and many, even the king of Aſſyria and all his glory: and he ſhall come up over all his channels, and go over all his banks. And he ſhall paſs thro' Judah; he ſhall overflow and go over; he ſhall reach even to the neck, and the ſtretching out of his wings ſhall fill the breadth of thy land, O IMMANUEL* ‡. The king of

* Rom. i. 18. † Hoſ. v. 12, 14. ‡ Iſ. viii. 7, 8.

of Assyria and his army, determined to invade Judah, are signified by *the waters of the river*. These *the LORD bringeth up;* over-ruling the purposes of ambitious princes, and making even their wicked designs subservient to his holy will.—They are, like the waters of an immense flood, *strong and many;* their multitude innumerable, and their force unconquerable. For they shall come with *all their glory;* with their choicest troops, their ablest commanders, and their whole warlike artillery. *He shall come up over all his channels, and go over all his banks:* from all parts of his vast dominion, his troops shall be assembled; each province shall be drained of its bravest inhabitants; and all unite to render this expedition one of the most formidable that ever was undertaken.—*He shall pass through Judah;* not only make inroads upon the frontiers, but push his way through the country, and penetrate the very heart of the kingdom. *He shall overflow;* spread terror and desolation on every side, and in every quarter. *He shall go over* villages, towns, cities, tribes; and bear down all before him. He *shall reach even to the neck;* his ravages shall extend even to the royal city, to the very gates of the metropolis; threatening destruction to the palace of the king, and the walls of the temple. *The stretching out of his wings*, the several detachments and parties of his victorious army, *shall fill the breadth* of the land with havock, slaughter, and ruin; even *of thy land, O IMMANUEL.* Their relation to thee shall procure no favour, shall afford no protection. They have dishonoured that goodly name wherewith they were called. Therefore, that goodly name shall no longer stand in the breach, but pour itself with the torrent, and render it irresistible.—Such an inundation of judgments, so terrible, so destructive, have not we deserved, may not we expect?

These judgments are compared to *fire*, and to the fiercest of fires, that which glows in a *furnace*. "The

"house

" houſe of Iſrael is to me become droſs, all they are " braſs, and tin, and iron, and lead, in the midſt of " the furnace; they are even the droſs of ſilver. " Therefore thus ſaith the LORD GOD, becauſe ye " are all become droſs, behold, therefore I will ga- " ther you into the midſt of Jeruſalem. As they ga- " ther braſs, and iron, and tin, and lead into the midſt " of the furnace, to blow the fire upon it, to melt it; " ſo will I gather you, in mine anger, and in my fu- " ry; and I will leave you there and melt you. Yea, " I will gather you, and blow upon you in the fire of " my wrath, and ye ſhall be melted in the midſt there- " of *." Aſtoniſhing words! And they are doubled! they are redoubled! in order to alarm the inſenſible ſinners: as the ſword, by being brandiſhed in many a dreadful circle, over the criminal's head, ſtrikes terror into his apprehenſions, before it does the work of vengeance on his heart.—This generation is become *braſs*, impudent in their wickedneſs. They have a whore's forehead; they cannot bluſh at their iniquities, but glory in their ſhame.--They are *tin;* a degenerate race, children that are corrupters. They have forſaken the good old way, and ſwerved from the example of their fathers.—With regard to hardneſs of heart, they are as *iron;* impenitent amidſt all their guilt; obſtinately tenacious of their vices; and not to be wrought upon by any addreſſes, not to be reclaimed by any expedients.—In another reſpect, they are as *lead;* ſtupid and ſottiſh; pliable to evil, but for any good purpoſe unmeet, to every good work reprobate.—Becauſe they are ſo exceedingly ſinful, they ſhall be overtaken by GOD's anger, and ſurrounded by his fury; as metals caſt into *the midſt of a furnace*, are ſurrounded with the raging heat. The flame of this wrath ſhall *be blown*, as with a vehement wind, to its utmoſt height. In this furnace they ſhall *be left*, to this wrath they ſhall be abandoned; till, by a complication of

* Ezek. xxii. 18, 19, 20, 21.

of afflictions, reſembling the complication of their vices, they are overcome, ſubdued, and even *melted;* ſo melted, as to be either purged from the droſs of their iniquities, or elſe blended together in one promiſcuous ruin.

Theſe judgments are deſcribed by the terrible repreſentation of *an end.* An end of affluence and proſperity, of which we have gloried: an end of power and ſtrength, in which we have truſted: an end of all national bleſſings, which we have not improved to GOD's honour, but turned into licentiouſneſs. *Thus ſaith the LORD GOD, An end, the end is come upon the four corners of the land. The ſword is without, and the peſtilence and the famine within: he that is in the field, ſhall die with the ſword; and he that is in the city, peſtilence and famine ſhall devour him* *. For this we have been ripening, by an unintermitted courſe of ungodlineſs and iniquity. And what can be expected by an impenitent people, hating to be reformed? What, but that judgments, which have long been ſuſpended, ſhould at laſt be inflicted? *An end is come: —it is come upon the land.* It is a national viſitation; not confined to a part, but extending to the whole kingdom.—*Upon the four corners* of the land. No place ſhall be exempt; nothing ſecure: neither that which ſeems to be moſt ſecret, nor that which lies moſt remote. The vengeance is univerſal and inevitable.—The executioners of this vengeance take their ſtand, within and without, at home and abroad; ſo that to fly from one is only to fall into the hands of another. *He that is in the field* ſhall find no way to eſcape, *but ſhall die with the ſword. He that is in the city* ſhall obtain no protection, but *famine and peſtilence ſhall devour him.* Every city ſhall be a charnel-houſe, and every field a field of blood. In city and country ſin has prodigiouſly abounded; therefore in city and country

* Ezek. vii. 2, 15.

country desolation shall be made, deaths shall be multiplied, miseries shall abound.

These are some of the images, by which the judgments and the wrath of GOD are represented in the scriptures. But when all images are used, when fancy itself is exhausted, we may truly cry out with the Psalmist, *Who knoweth the power of thine anger* *? If GOD whet his glittering sword, and his hand take hold on judgment, what can withstand it, or who can sustain it? If his wrath be kindled, yea but a little, *it shall consume the earth with her increase; it shall set on fire the foundation of the mountains*, and *burn to the lowest hell* †.

When *the lion has roared*, says the prophet, *who will not fear?* When the most high GOD has spoken; spoken such terrible things in righteousness; who will not lay them to heart? O! how deep is that sleep; how deadly is that lethargy, which the voice of him who shakes the heavens does neither alarm nor awe!

Lest you should begin to say within yourselves, These threatenings are applicable only to the Jews, I proceed to shew,

3. The *certain execution* of these, or some such judgments on us, unless we fly to the appointed refuge.

GOD is an infinite speaker. In his word, he addresses himself to all generations of men, and to every individual of the human kind, where his holy revelation is made. It is therefore a certain rule, that when any people, enlightened by the glorious gospel, become, like Jerusalem, universally and incorrigibly corrupt; they do, in Jerusalem's doom, read their own.

GOD is the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever. He remembereth his threatenings, as well as his promises, to a thousand generations. Whatsoever, of either

* Psal. xc. 11. † Deut. xxxii. 22.

ther kind, happened to our forefathers, *happened to them as enſamples* to us. And *whatſoever was written aforetime, was written for our learning*. Obſerve, it was written, not for our amuſement, but *for our learning* and *admonition* *; that we may, as in a mirror, ſee our own picture; and, as from an oracle, learn our own deſtiny.

Is it not in a manner neceſſary, for the manifeſtation of GOD's inflexible juſtice, and his unalterable hatred of ſin, that judgments ſhould take their courſe; when iniquity rears its head, and refuſes to be controlled? At ſuch a juncture does not every one of the divine attributes cry aloud, *O LORD GOD, to whom vengeance belongeth; thou GOD, to whom vengeance belongeth, ſhew thyſelf.*—And how can the juſtice of GOD, with regard to a wicked *nation*, be ſhewn, but by executing his vengeance upon them, in temporal calamities?

Conſider, Sirs, the very eſſence of nations and political communities is temporal, purely temporal. They have no duration, no exiſtence, but in this world. Hereafter ſinners will be judged and puniſhed ſingly, and in a perſonal capacity *only*. How then ſhall He, who *is ruler among the nations*, maintain the dignity of his government over the kingdoms of the earth, but by inflicting national puniſhments, for national provocations; and, for final impenitence, total deſtruction?

Beſides, has not the LORD always acted in this manner? Go back to the generations of old. Contemplate Sodom and Gomorrah, and the cities about them; well watered every where, even as the garden of the LORD. Yet *this fruitful land is made barren*, thoſe populous cities are turned into aſhes, *for the wickedneſs of them that dwelt therein* †; for their pride and idleneſs; for their voluptuous and wanton indulgencies. *For which things ſake the wrath of GOD* not only

* 1 Cor. x. 11. † Pſal. cvii. 34.

only has come, in former ages, and in distant nations; but in every age *cometh*, and in every nation will come *upon the children of disobedience* *.

Pass over to Babylon, the grandest city that the sun ever beheld; which set calamity at defiance, saying in her heart, *I shall be a lady for ever* †. How is she fallen! *swept with the besom of destruction* ‡! Not so much as a trace or footstep of her ancient glory left! And shall *we* be safe, when those very iniquities prevail among us, which razed the foundations of the Babylonian metropolis, and overthrew the magnificence of the Babylonian monarchy?

Take a view of Constantinople, once the most flourishing Christian city in the world; where the first Christian emperor filled the throne, and Chrysostom, that great Christian orator, the pulpit. Then it was gloriously enlightened with the knowledge of JESUS CHRIST. Grace and truth dwelt in it; and the beauties of holiness adorned it. But now the candlestick is removed. It is now given up to infidelity and barbarity; is now full of darkness, and cruel habitations.

Come hither then, ye careless ones, and see what desolations sin has made in the earth. On account of sin Sodom was consumed, as in a moment; Babylon is totally destroyed ‖; Constantinople has lost her glory.

* Col. iii. 6. † Is. xlvii. 7. ‡ Is. xiv. 23.

‖ Will any, raised in their own conceit above the vulgar level, neglect these admonitions with a smile of disdain? Because they can assign the *second causes* of some such evils, as have been described, will they therefore quiet their spirits, amidst the alarming prospect of judgments from heaven?—They have heard (I make no doubt) that a midnight-debauch in Babylon, and a popular sedition in Jerusalem, left the gates of the former open to Cyrus, and the walls of the latter without defence to Vespasian. Perhaps they will suppose, that the overthrow of Sodom was occasioned by the shock of an earthquake; and that the fire from heaven was produced by sulphureous exhalations.

Be

ry. And will the LORD, the LORD GOD, who is unchangeably juſt and holy; will he ſpare *that* in one people which he has ſo ſeverely corrected in another? *He that chaſtiſeth the Heathen, ſhall not he puniſh* us, when we do according to all their abominations?

Have *we* a licence to ſin with impunity? are our ſins leſs hainous than thoſe of other people? quite the reverſe. Conſidering the many bleſſings which we enjoy as a nation; the many deliverances we have enjoyed as a Proteſtant nation; the numberleſs advantages for religious knowledge and religious practice, which we both have enjoyed, and do enjoy above all the nations on earth;—conſidering theſe circumſtances, our wickedneſs is highly aggravated; it is become exceeding ſinful; it *overpaſſes the deeds* * of the moſt abandoned Heathens. What then can prevent our ruin?

Will you reply, "We faſt, and humble ourſelves "before

Be the premiſſes ever ſo certain, is there any thing rational in the concluſion? Is not what we term the *courſe of nature*, the inceſſant adminiſtration of *providence?* are not many of its ordinary appearances very evident indications of a righteous and holy government, unalterably determined to puniſh ſin? The poverty and ignominy of the lazy vagabond; the diſeaſes of the debauchee, and the diſtreſſes of the ſpendthrift; are theſe leſs manifeſt ſigns of divine diſpleaſure, becauſe they are the immediate effects of an evil conduct? are they not as certainly the *judicial*, the *penal*, as they are the *natural* conſequences of vice?

Let thoſe therefore who fear no judgments, compare cauſes and events. If ſelfiſhneſs, avarice, and venality; if indolence, luxury, and prodigality; if youth without principles, tradeſmen without honeſty, and nobles without honour; if theſe are allowed to be either provoking immoralities or fatal ſymptoms, I fear the ruin of England cannot be far off. GOD Almighty grant we miniſters may not accelerate the fall of our country, by neglecting to warn every man, and exhort every man, to the great evangelical duty of BELIEVING; in order to promote national reformation, and to eſcape national deſtruction.

* Jer. v. 28.

"before the LORD?"—I ask, Do we fast from sin? are our fast-days the beginning of a gospel-reformation? When we abstain from our daily bread, do we turn by faith to JESUS CHRIST; that *eating his flesh, and drinking his blood, we may live thro' him* *? live in holiness here, and live in glory hereafter, by applying his immaculate righteousness to our souls. —If this is the case, we may entertain reviving hopes. The scripture speaks good words, and comfortable words, to such people; be their condition ever so vile, or their guilt ever so great.—But alas! are we not just the same persons the day after our fast as we were before? as vain in our conversation, and as forgetful of GOD? as fond of folly, and as negligent of divine grace? as mad upon our idols, of carnal gratification; and worldly gain?—If so, our fasts are not an acceptable, no, nor a reasonable service; but a mere mockery of the omniscient Majesty. May he not justly use that upbraiding expostulation? *Will ye steal, and commit adultry, and swear falsely, and walk after other gods*, serving, not the LORD JEHOVAH, but divers lusts and pleasures; and then, with hypocritical devotion, *stand before me in this house, which is called by my name*†?

Perhaps you are ready to alledge, "Our alms will "deliver us. The son of Sirach exhorts us, to *shut "up alms in our store-houses;* and assures us, that *they "shall fight for us against our enemies, better than a "mighty shield and strong spear*‡. And when was "there a greater flow of beneficence observable in "our own, or in any land? What sums have been "given to the poor during this severe season of cold "and scarcity! what hospitals of various sorts, and "other charitable foundations, have been set on foot, "and are supported through the kingdom!"—Let us beware, brethren, lest those very things, which we look upon as our recommendation, should prove an offence

* John vi. 57. † Jer. vii. 9, 10. ‡ Eccles. xxix. 12, 13.

fence. If our alms proceed not from faith in JESUS CHRIST, and an unfeigned zeal for the glory of GOD; if they are not accompanied with a ſpirit of love to his name, and with a courſe of obedience to his commands; hear what the LORD himſelf ſays concerning ſuch works; ſee what a figure they make in his ſight; and then judge, whether they are likely to be a ſecurity to our land. "I hate, I deſpiſe your "feaſt-days, and I will not ſmell in your ſolemn aſ- "ſemblies. Tho' ye offer me burnt-offerings, and your "meat-offerings, I will not accept them; neither will I "regard the peace-offerings of your fat beaſts. Take "thou away from me the noiſe of thy ſongs; for I "will not hear the melody of thy viols." Hymns of praiſe, you ſee, are no other than a *noiſe* in the LORD's ear; the moſt coſtly ſervices of religion are no better than a *ſmoke* in his noſtrils; unleſs *judgment*, and the love of GOD, *run down as a river*; unleſs *righteouſneſs*, and the faith of *CHRIST*, abound *as a mighty ſtream* *.

Do you ſtill conceit yourſelves, that, becauſe there are many righteous perſons remaining, *they* will ſtand in the gap; *they* will turn away the anger of the LORD, and be as the chariots of Iſrael, and the horſemen of Iſrael, to our endangered ſtate?—Here what a charge the ſupreme JEHOVAH gave to his prophet, when the provocations of Iſrael were riſen to a very high pitch: *Pray not thou for this people, neither lift up cry nor prayer for them, neither make interceſſion to me: for I will not hear thee* †. Amazing and awful prohibition! Yet it is repeated again and again‡.—God's profeſſing people may, by their exceſſive wickedneſs, become ſo inſufferably loathſome, that were the greateſt ſaints to make ſupplication in their behalf, they ſhould not prevail. Though Noah, Daniel, and Job, men mighty in prayer, and zealous for the welfare of their neighbours; though theſe three men (who had each, by

* Amos v. 21, 22, 23, 24. † Jer. vii. 16.
‡ Jer. xi. 14. & xiv. 11.

by his ſingle interceſſion, procured bleſſings from heaven) were uniting their petitions in the midſt of this profligate generation; *as I live, ſaith the LORD GOD, they ſhall deliver neither ſons nor daughters; they only ſhall be delivered, but the land ſhall be deſolate* *.

The land ſhall be deſolate.—Doleful ſound! diſmal decree! And has it not long ago been carried into execution? Was not Jeruſalem ploughed as a field, and trodden down by the Gentiles? are not the inhabitants rooted out of their dwellings, and ſcattered to all the ends of the earth? while their country is given up for a prey and for a poſſeſſion to ſtrangers, to infidels, to Turks.

Perhaps you will ſay, "The Jews crucified the "LORD of glory, and rejected his goſpel: *therefore* "wrath came upon them to the uttermoſt."—And are *we* innocent in this reſpect? are not we verily, are not we greatly guilty concerning this thing? Is *CHRIST* received into the hearts of men, with deep adoration of his perſon, as IMMANUEL, GOD with us? do they glory and delight themſelves in his complete redemption, as finiſhed by the great GOD and our SAVIOUR? do they confide in him alone for their juſtification, as an infinite Surety, and as JEHOVAH our righteouſneſs? do they depend on him alone for their ſanctification, as JESUS, who ſaves his people from their ſins, and ſanctifies them through his blood? do they count all things but dung, for the excellency of *CHRIST*, and his incomprehenſible merit?—Alas! is not his goſpel, though the light of the world, diſregarded and deſpiſed? is not his name, though a name above every name, derided and blaſphemed? are not the influences of his eternal SPIRIT, though the very life of our ſouls, exploded and ridiculed? They who would exalt the SAVIOUR, would make every ſheaf bow down to the REDEEMER's repreſenting

* Ezek. xiv. 16.

preſenting him as the Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, in the ſalvation of ſinners; thoſe preachers, thoſe writers, thoſe believers, are treated as *the fooliſh people that dwell in Sichem* *.

What the Jews did through ignorance, we, who call ourſelves Chriſtians, Engliſhmen, Proteſtants; we do knowingly, wilfully, and of malicious wickedneſs. And if we thus trample upon the blood which alone can ſcreen us; if we thus crucify afreſh that JESUS who is our only hope; what can we look for, but vengeance and fiery indignation? If we ourſelves, with our own hands, demoliſh the only barrier, what can enſue, but an inundation of wrath, tribulation, and anguiſh?

Conſider theſe things, brethren. The LORD enable you to diſcern the ſigns of the times! Then you will acknowledge, that we have reaſon to be alarmed, to tremble, to be horribly afraid.—Are not theſe iniquities the Achans, that will aſſuredly bring diſtreſs and trouble, if not deſtruction, upon our country? are not theſe iniquities the Jonahs, that will awaken the divine diſpleaſure, and deliver up our veſſel to the tempeſt, if not to ſhipwreck?

Is any one diſpoſed to ſay within himſelf, "Though "others may be guilty of theſe flagrant iniquities, "yet am not I?"—Remember, my friend, the prophet Iſaiah. He was, at leaſt, as free from theſe flagrant iniquities as yourſelf. Yet he laments, and with painful apprehenſions, the guilt of his countrymen, as well as his own †.—Remember king Joſiah. Tho' a holy man and a juſt, he rent his clothes, and trembled at GOD's word denouncing vengeance againſt an irreligious people ‡.

Conſider alſo, whether you have not been an acceſſary, even where you was not the principal. Though you have not joined with the more profligate ſinners, nor

* Eccluſ. l. 26. † Iſ. vi. 5. ‡ 2 Kings xxii. 12, 13.

nor ſat in the ſeat of the ſcornful; yet have you not connived at their impiety? Do their affronts offered to the King of heaven rouſe you into a becoming zeal to vindicate his injured honour? or, *becauſe iniquity has abounded*, is not your love, and *the love of many waxed cold* *? Have not the diſciples, even the diſciples of *JESUS*, been cowards and traitors; while others have been profeſſed enemies and rebels?

Beſides, have not you, have not I, have not all contributed, in many, many inſtances, to ſwell the ſcore of national provocations? Is not every ſin a diſobedience of GOD's moſt holy command? is not every ſin a defiance of his uncontrollable authority? is not every ſin an imitation of the devil? does it not create a kind of hell in the heart? muſt it not therefore be inconceiveably odious to the *holy, holy, holy LORD GOD of Sabaoth?*—If ſo, how guilty are the very beſt among us? Is not *this accurſed thing* † found in all our tents? Has not every one added to the load, that dreadful load, which is likely to ſink the nation in ruin? Should not every one, therefore, ſmite upon his breaſt, and ſay, with the penitent, *What have I done!* and cry with the publican, GOD *be merciful to me a ſinner!*

Will you ſtill flatter yourſelf? "All theſe judg-"ments may be delayed: they may not come in my "time."—I anſwer, If there be any truth in GOD's word; if any conjecture is to be made from the appearance of things; theſe judgments are near; they are at the door. They are like the axe in the executioner's hand, which has been poiſed, has received its laſt elevation, and is now falling on the criminal's neck.—Yet, if theſe ſhould be with-held for a ſeaſon, will not ſickneſs come upon you? are not many diſaſters lying in ambuſh to ſeize you? is not death ſharpening his arrow; perhaps fitting it to the ſtring; or

* Matth. xxiv. 12. † Joſh. vi. 18.

or even aiming at your life? Is not the day, the dreadful day approaching, when the ſhout of the archangel and the trump of GOD will be heard; when the dead ſhall ariſe, and heaven and earth flee away? will not the LORD, the LORD GOD omnipotent quickly come, "with ten thouſands of his ſaints, to "execute judgment upon all, and to convince all that "are ungodly, of all their ungodly deeds, which they "have ungodlily committed; and of all their hard "ſpeeches, which ungodly ſinners have ſpoken a-"gainſt him *?"

Take then, my dear hearers, take the advice of the greateſt of preachers, and the wiſeſt of men; *The prudent foreſeeth the evil, and hideth himſelf* †.—Behold! the rains are deſcending, and the flood is coming; haſten like Noah, haſten to your ark. See! the ſkies are kindling all around, and the ſhafts of vengeance are ready to fly. Make haſte, Oh! make haſte, and delay not the time, to get into a hiding-place.—Let me ſound in your ears the angel's admonition; and may the LORD of angels, may the Friend of ſinners, convey it to your hearts! *Eſcape for your lives, leſt ye be conſumed:* leſt the judgments of GOD, and the wrath of GOD, more to be feared than a deluge of waters, more to be feared than a torrent of flames, ſurround you ſuddenly,—ſeize you unavoidably,—and overwhelm you in ruin, temporal and eternal.

O that I might prevail! O that GOD would make you ſenſible of your peril! O that man, woman, and child, would aſk, "How ſhall I fly from the wrath "to come? where ſhall I be ſafe in the day of viſita-"tion? Shew me the ark! ſhew me the refuge!"—I ſhould then, with great ſatisfaction, proceed to anſwer this inquiry; and point out *CHRIST* to your ſouls, as the *only* hiding-place, as the *ſure* hiding-place, where you may certainly find ſafety. But this muſt be the buſineſs, the pleaſing buſineſs of my next diſcourſe.

* Jude, ver. 14, 15. † Prov. xxii. 3.

Let me beſeech you, in the mean time, to lay theſe alarming truths to heart: let them impreſs your conſciences! let them penetrate your ſouls! And O thou gracious, thou almighty LORD GOD, do thou command them to ſink deep into all our minds: that we may, with Ezra thy prieſt, ſit down *aſhamed and aſtoniſhed* *, under a ſenſe of our manifold iniquities:—That we may, with thy ſervant Job, *abhor ourſelves, and repent in duſt and aſhes* †:—That we may, in the words, and with the compunction of thy prophet, every one cry out, *Wo is me, for I am undone: becauſe I am a man of unclean lips; and I dwell in the midſt of a people of unclean lips* ‡.

* Ezra. ix. 3. † Job xlii. 6. ‡ Iſ. vi. 5.

SER-

SERMON II.

The Means of Safety.

HEB. xi. 28.

Through faith he kept the paſſover, and the ſprinkling of blood, leſt he that deſtroyed the firſt-born, ſhould touch them.

WE have been conſidering the danger of our nation occaſioned,—by the *ſin* of its inhabitants,—by the *judgments* of GOD, denounced againſt ſuch ſinners,—by the *certain execution* of his righteous threatenings, unleſs we fly to the appointed refuge.—When ſuch is the ſtate of a nation, it is high time for the watchmen on her walls to lift up their voice; not indeed to ſpread vain terrors, but to give notice of the approaching evil; to warn the unwary; to call in the ſtragglers; and urge every one to retire into a place of ſafety.

Having, in the preceding diſcourſe, attempted to diſcharge this office; I ſhall now, brethren, as in the preſence of the all-ſeeing GOD, aſk,—Have we been attentive to theſe things; are we alarmed with a ſenſe of our guilt and our peril? have we, with the prophet Iſaiah, lamented our own, and the ſins of our people?—If ſo, we ſhall highly prize, we ſhall ardently deſire, the ſame conſolation, and the ſame relief, which the GOD of infinitely-free goodneſs vouchſafed to his ſervant. *Then flew one of the ſeraphims unto me, having a live coal in his hand, which he had taken*

taken from off the altar, and he laid it upon my mouth *: an action which represents the very thing signified in the text by *the sprinkling of blood.*

The *altar* typified *CHRIST;* who is both the sacrifice that makes the atonement, and the altar that sanctifies the gift.—The *live coal* seems to betoken the word of grace, and the word of life; which brings the glad tidings of the gospel, and testifies of the bleeding *JESUS.*—*Laying this upon the mouth*, very significantly denotes the application of *CHRIST* and his great atonement. When this is done, under the influence of the SPIRIT, and by means of faith, then *iniquity is taken away, and sin purged;* taken away from the sight of GOD, and purged from the sinner's conscience. Guilt is abolished; fear ceases.—But this leads us to our second particular,

II. The method of security from danger, effected by *keeping the passover, and sprinkling the blood.*

Moses was apprised of a dreadful vengeance to be inflicted on Egypt; the most dreadful that ever was known since the beginning of their nation; so dreadful, that it would make every ear tingle, and every heart bleed. The destroying angel was to pass thro' all the territories of Pharaoh, and smite every first-born both of man and beast; so that, before the morning, there should be heaps of slain in the cities, the villages, the fields; not a house exempt, not a family spared, not a herd, nor a flock, free from the fatal calamity.

Moses feared the blow. He feared, as the text intimates, the least touch of the divine executioner's sword; knowing that it would crush him and his people, as a moth is crushed by the falling millstone. He is therefore greatly solicitous to provide for their welfare. But what expedient shall he use? Shall he give them orders to close their windows, and bar their doors;

* Is. vi. 7.

doors; to erect fortifications, and ſtand upon their defence? Alas! before an inviſible hand, armed with the vengeance of heaven, all ſuch precautions would have been as a ſpark before the whirlwind.—Shall he aſſemble the warriors, or detach parties of ſoldiers to patrole the ſtreets, and guard the houſes? Vanity of vanities! the ſword of the avenging angel would pierce through legions and legions of ſuch guards, as lightening penetrates the yielding air.—Shall the whole congregation bend their knees, with ſolemn confeſſion of their ſins, and ſincere reſolutions of future amendment? This, though abſolutely neceſſary to be done, was extremely improper to be relied on. It would have been relying on a broken reed, and deſpiſing the ordinance of the HOLY ONE.

The LORD himſelf appoints a method of preſervation. Moſes is directed to ſlay a lamb. Each family in Iſrael is to do the ſame. Having received the blood into a baſon, they are to ſprinkle it, not on the threſhold, but on the lintel and ſide-poſts of their doors. This ſhall be a ſign to the deſtroying angel. Looking upon this ſign, he will paſs over the houſe; will ſtrike no blow, and execute no vengeance, wherever he ſees the blood ſprinkled.—All this, in purſuance of the divine direction, being performed; with faith and tranquillity, they wait the event.

You will ſay, perhaps, What is all this to us? I anſwer, It is a pattern for our imitation.—Are we then to do the very ſame thing?—We are to do what their practice typified. The ſhadow was theirs, the ſubſtance is ours. The blood of the lamb typified the blood of *CHRIST*, who is the LAMB of GOD, ſlain for the ſins of the world.—By the blood of *CHRIST* is frequently ſignified in ſcripture the *whole* * merit of his life and death, of his actions and ſufferings, of his trials

* *Being juſtified by his blood*, Rom. v. 9. That is, being pardoned, being made righteous, and heirs of all ſpiritual bleſſings.

trials and graces: which satisfied GOD's justice, and magnified GOD's law; which made propitiation for iniquity, and brought in an everlasting righteousness. —Well does the apostle call it *precious blood*. Unspeakably precious are its effects. It appeases the wrath of GOD revealed from heaven, and makes peace between the offended CREATOR, and the offending creature. Sprinkled on the conscience, it takes away all guilt, and secures from all vengeance. —This, therefore, my brethren, this blood is our security. This is to our souls, what the blood of the paschal lamb was to the Israelitish families. *The name of the LORD*, the grace and goodness of GOD, manifested in the death and obedience of *CHRIST*, *is a strong tower:* not only *the righteous* person, but the distressed creature, and the endangered sinner, *runneth unto it and is safe* *.

Since this is a point of the utmost importance, it cannot be too clearly displayed, or too strongly established. For this purpose, the scripture gives us several most amiable and instructive views of *CHRIST*, as our refuge and safety.—He is called a *hiding-place* †. To a hiding-place people retreat, and are secure from their enemies, even from those cruel enemies that seek their destruction. Thus the prophets, whom Obadiah hid by fifty in a cave, were secure from Ahab's tyranny, and Jezebel's persecution. So the soul that flies

sings.—*Thou hast redeemed us to GOD by thy blood*, Rev. vi. 9. That is, thou hast delivered us from all sin and all wrath; thou hast reconciled us to the Almighty MAJESTY, and introduced us into his blissful presence.—These blessings, ascribed to our LORD's blood, are confessedly the fruit, not barely of his sufferings, but of his whole humiliation, obedience, and death. Therefore, in a very valuable dictionary of the most valuable words and phrases, we have this explication of the *blood of the LAMB*; "The sacrifice of *CHRIST*'s "death, together with his perfect righteousness and holiness "imputed." See Wilson's Christ. Dict.

* Prov. xviii. 10. † Is. xxxii. 2.

flies to *CHRIST*, that takes ſanctuary under the blood of ſprinkling, is ſecure from the moſt formidable of all enemies; is ſecure from all the wrath due to ſin, and from every accuſation which Satan can bring. To ſuch a perſon ſhall be fulfilled what is ſpoken by the prophet Jeremiah; *When the iniquity of Iſrael ſhall be ſought for, there ſhall be none; and the ſins of Judah, they ſhall not be found* *.

CHRIST is ſtyled *a covert from the tempeſt. A man*, ſays Iſaiah, that is, the GOD-man *CHRIST JESUS, ſhall be as an hiding-place from the wind, and a covert from the tempeſt* †. When the thunders roar, and the lightnings flath; when the clouds pour down water, and a horrid ſtorm comes on; all that are in the open air retire under the branches of a thick tree, or fly to ſome other commodious ſhelter. What ſtorm can be ſo dreadful as the righteous vengeance of GOD, poured out upon a ſinful nation? What ſtorm can be ſo dreadful as the eternal vengeance of GOD, poured out upon a ſinful ſoul? To both theſe we are expoſed, to both theſe we are juſtly liable. But *CHRIST*'s blood and righteouſneſs are a covert. Hither we may fly, and be ſcreened; hither we may fly, and be ſafe: ſafe as was Noah when he entered the ark; and GOD's own hand cloſed the door, and GOD's own eye guided its motions. For *there is no condemnation* of any kind, or from any quarter, *to them that are in CHRIST JESUS* ‡.

CHRIST is compared to a *ſtrong-hold. Turn ye to the ſtrong-hold*, ſays the prophet Zechariah ‖. When ſoldiers fly from a victorious army, being admitted into an impregnable caſtle, they are beyond the reach of danger. They give their fears to the wind, and repoſe themſelves in tranquillity. When ſinners fly by faith to the dying JESUS, they alſo, from thenceforth, are in *a tower of ſalvation* §. They may ſay, each

* Jer. l. 20. † Iſ. xxxii. 2.
‡ Rom. viii. 1. ‖ Zech. ix. 12. § 2 Sam. xxii. 51.

each one for himself, "Soul, take thine ease. All thy "guilt is laid upon thy LORD, and punished in thy "Surety. The flaming sword of justice is returned "to the sheath, having received full satisfaction from "the sufferings of *CHRIST*. The curse of a vio- "lated law is no more, having been executed to the "utmost upon the person of my REDEEMER. Nay, "its curse is turned into a blessing. For *CHRIST* "*has redeemed us from the curse of the law, that the* "*blessing of Abraham might come upon us Gentiles* *: "even the blessing of perfect reconciliation, and ever- "lasting friendship, with GOD most high."

This leads me to mention another beautiful comparison, which represents *CHRIST* not only as the cause of safety, but as the source of consolation. He shall be *as rivers of water in a dry place, and as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land* †.—In a dry place, burnt up for want of moisture, nothing is so desirable, nothing so refreshing as water. To the poor sinful soul, of whose condition the parched ground is a fit resemblance, *CHRIST* shall be, not barely as the morning-dew, not barely as the transient shower, but as a river; yea, as *rivers of water*, that flow in copious and never-failing streams through the thirsty soil; making even the sandy desert green with herbage, and gay with flowers.—In a sultry clime, where the sun pours insufferable heat, and all things languish under the glaring rays, nothing is so chearing to the labourer, nothing so welcome to the traveller, as a cool and gloomy *shade*. A poor soul, assaulted by the fiery darts of Satan, and distressed with the remembrance of former iniquities, is this sultry clime, or *weary land*. But *CHRIST* and his atonement are not barely as the boughs of an oak, which extend their coolness to a small distance; not barely as the canopy of an alcove, through which much of the glowing influence

* Gal. iii. 13, 14. † Is. xxxii. 2.

influence penetrates; but like the *shadow of a rock*, a *great* rock; which projects the friendly shade over many a league; which has repelled and excluded the sun, through all preceding ages; and gives you, as it were "the cold of snow amidst the heat of har-"vest *."

Here then, brethren, is our security amidst all peril. The blood, the righteousness, the infinitely-glorious person of *CHRIST*; these are our hiding place—these are our covert—these are our strong-hold. And (blessed be GOD!) the doors stand wide open: they are never shut, night nor day. The access is free for any, free for all, free for the greatest sinners. We are not only allowed, but we are invited; nay, we are commanded, to approach; to enter; to enjoy the protection; or, as the words of the text express it, to *sprinkle the blood* on our souls.

Sprinkle the blood on our souls! You will probably say, "What does this signify? What was done by "Moses, when he sprinkled the visible blood, we easi-"ly apprehend: but how can we sprinkle the blood "of *CHRIST*, which we never saw? the blood of "*CHRIST*, whom the heavens have received?"—This is one of those mysteries which the natural man understandeth not; he can form no notion of it; it is foolishness to his apprehension. Therefore, may the eternal SPIRIT both teach us to understand the doctrine, and enable us to practise the duty!

To sprinkle the blood of *CHRIST*, is truly to *believe* in *CHRIST*, in his infinite atonement and everlasting righteousness: it is to *receive* these blessings as GOD's free gift to men, to sinners, to ourselves in particular; and, having received, to make continual *use* of them in every time of trial, for every occasion of need.

Perhaps this doctrine may become clearer, if we illustrate

* Prov. xxv. 13.

luſtrate it by an example. A remarkable example we have in the practice of David. After the commiſſion of his grievous crimes, he did, in a very eminent manner, ſprinkle the blood. For he ſaid unto the LORD, *Thou ſhalt purge me with hyſſop*, (the inſtrument of ſprinkling the typical blood,) *and I ſhall be clean; thou ſhalt waſh me* in the fountain opened for ſin and uncleanneſs, *and I ſhall be whiter than ſnow* *. This fountain he looked upon as opened for *his* ſins; and fully ſufficient to cleanſe him from all his filthineſs; ſo that he ſhould be as free from ſpot, before the righteous Judge, as the ſnow on Salmon was free from ſtain.—Had he ſaid within himſelf, "My crimes are "too great for this blood to expiate;" or, "This "blood cannot be ſhed for ſo vile an offender as I "am:" he would then have put the atonement far from him, together with all its expiating virtue. This would have been not to apply, but to throw away the blood; not to ſprinkle it upon the ſoul, but to pour it upon the ground.

Come then, brethren; come, fellow-ſinners; let us alſo, in this day of fear and danger, look unto *CHRIST*, as dying that we may live; as made ſin, that we may be made the righteouſneſs of GOD in him; as made a curſe, that we may inherit eternal bleſſedneſs.—Let us look unto *JESUS* as taking our nature, and ſtanding in our ſtead. Behold him apprehended as a thief; ignominiouſly bound, and marked with the laſhes of the ſcourge. Behold him crowned with thorns; his hair clotted, his face diſcoloured, his breaſt and ſhoulders all bedewed with his own moſt innocent blood. Behold him nailed to the croſs; hanging in the moſt racking poſture, till all his bones are out of joint; hanging amidſt malefactors, forſaken of GOD, of angels and men. Behold him bowing his head in death, and ſtabbed to the heart with the executioner's

* Pſal. li. 7.

executioner's ſpear.—Thus behold him, and ſay, "Verily, this ſufferer was the SON of GOD, and "the LORD of glory. Verily, theſe ſufferings were "the puniſhment due to *my* ſins. In all this extreme "anguiſh he bore *my* griefs, and carried *my* ſorrows. "He was oppreſſed, and he was afflicted, becauſe I "had done amiſs and done wickedly. He was cut "off out of the land of the living, that he might "make his ſoul an offering for *my* ſins, and obtain "eternal redemption for *me*."

Thus behold the bleſſed *JESUS;* thus, ſinners, behold the LORD your righteouſneſs; with this look of application, with this appropriating faith. Be verily perſuaded, that you ſhall find mercy before a holy GOD; not becauſe you have any worthineſs, but becauſe *CHRIST* has incomparable merit; that you ſhall never come into condemnation, not becauſe you have faſted and prayed, but becauſe *CHRIST* is your great propitiation. Be perſuaded, that GOD, has given his SON for you; that GOD gives his SON to you; and together with him eternal life.—Be perſuaded of all this, upon the beſt of foundations, the infallible word of GOD; who has declared, that *CHRIST* died for the *ungodly* *, and by his obedience *ſinners* are made righteous †; that *CHRIST* was wounded on the croſs, and intercedes in heaven for *tranſgreſſors* ‡; that he received ſpiritual gifts, and divine bleſſings, even for the *rebellious* ‖.—The LORD GOD omnipotent, the author and finiſher of faith, enable you thus to believe! on the ground of his own moſt ſure word, thus to believe! Then you keep the Chriſtian paſſover; then you ſprinkle the blood of *CHRIST;* then you may boldly ſay, *Under his ſhadow we ſhall be ſafe*.—Which reminds us of the third particular, namely,

III. The

* Rom. v. 6.
† Rom. v. 19.
‡ Iſ. liii. 12.
‖ Pſal. lxviii. 18.

III. The ſucceſs of this method, denoted by the deſtroyer not ſo much as *touching* them. *Leſt he that deſtroyed the firſt-born ſhould touch them.*—What a beautiful antitheſis! The Egyptian firſt-born were wounded, were mortally wounded, were abſolutely *deſtroyed;* the Iſraelites were not hurt, nor endangered, no, nor ſo much as *touched.* So ſure and complete a defence was this blood of ſprinkling!—Nothing elſe could have yielded *any* protection; this afforded *perfect* ſecurity. When this was ſprinkled on their door-poſts, they had no cauſe to be *afraid for the terror by night, nor for the arrow that flieth by day; for the peſtilence that walketh in darkneſs, nor for the deſtruction that waſteth at noon-day* *.

And is not the hiding-place, the covert, the ſtrong-hold, provided for *us* in the blood and righteouſneſs of *CHRIST*, an equal ſecurity? do they not yield abſolute, perfect, conſummate ſafety? Nothing elſe could adminiſter the leaſt hope to the chiefeſt apoſtle; this opens an inviolable ſanctuary even for the greateſt of ſinners. None ever periſhed who laid their help upon *CHRIST*, He *ſaves*—he ſaves *to the uttermoſt;* —he ſaves not a few only, but *all*—all *that come unto GOD through him* †. Is our danger great? Our ſecurity is greater. Is our danger exceeding great? Our ſecurity is incomparably greater. In ſhort, our refuge and ſecurity are the greateſt that can be wiſhed, that can be imagined, that GOD himſelf could provide.—Chearing, charming, raviſhing truth! Suffer me to enlarge upon it, brethren. Let your attention hang on the glad tidings. May your hearts imbibe the precious doctrine!

Had *more than forty men bound themſelves with an oath, that they would neither eat nor drink till they had killed* ‡ ſome one in this congregation; the danger would be great, and the caſe ſtartling. Nevertheleſs, the

* Pſal. xci. 5, 6. † Heb. vii. 25. ‡ Acts xxiii. 21.

the endangered perſon would think him ſufficiently ſafe, if he could ſteal away, and hide himſelf in one of the deepeſt caves of America, with a vaſt tract of unknown land, and all the waters of the vaſter ocean between himſelf and the ruffians. Much ſafer will your ſouls be under the hiding, cleanſing, atoning efficacy of this blood of ſprinkling; by which unrighteouſneſſes are forgiven, ſins are covered, and iniquities done away, as though they had never been.

Were you overtaken by a violent and impetuous ſtorm? If you ſought ſhelter under a covert that was firmer than boards of cedar, harder than ſlabs of marble, thicker than the roofs of all the houſes in Europe; you would reckon yourſelves ſecure from torrents of rain, or from volleys of hail. Much more ſecure will you be from everlaſting wrath; ſecure, even when *the LORD ſhall rain ſnares, fire and brimſtone, ſtorm and tempeſt* *; provided you are found under the covert of *CHRIST*'s magnificent and meritorious righteouſneſs; by virtue of which, *all that believe are juſtified*—I ſay not from millions, or from thouſands of millions, but—*from all* offenſive, provoking, criminal *things* †.

Should you be purſued by a conquering foe, determined to cut you in pieces? If you turned into a caſtle whoſe walls were ſtronger than braſs, ſtronger than adamant, ſtronger than all the rocks in the world; you might laugh at the attempts of your enemy; you are guarded from the power and peril of the ſword. So, and abundantly more, are you guarded from every ſpiritual enemy, and from every ſpiritual evil, when you fly to the ſtrong-hold of *CHRIST*'s death and atonement. The ſouls that abide in *CHRIST*, *they ſhall dwell on high*; beyond the rage of the old ſerpent, and the great dragon: *their place of defence ſhall be the munitions of rocks* ‡; againſt which all the aſſaults

* Pſal. xi. 6. † Acts xiii. 39. ‡ Iſ. xxxiii. 16.

assaults of earth and hell shall never be able to prevail. They may say, with the triumphant apostle, *How much more shall we, who receive abundance of grace, and of the gift of righteousness*, be delivered from ruin, and *reign in life by CHRIST JESUS*!*

And will you not prize such a strong-hold? shall not such a covert be dear to your guilty souls? will you not set an exceeding great value upon such an hiding-place? especially when the storm is gathering and threatening all around; when days of desolation and perplexity are coming upon the world, and judgments, inflicted by men, may transmit us to the everlasting judgment of GOD.—How did Israel bless and adore their most merciful JEHOVAH, for granting them such an effectual means of preservation, as the blood of the paschal lamb! and shall not we bless and adore the same most gracious JEHOVAH, for granting us a means of preservation altogether as effectual, and incomparably more wonderful?

If you should say, "How does it appear, that the "blood of *CHRIST* is such a security? so great, so "wonderful, so matchless!"—Because it is the blood of him who is JEHOVAH's *fellow* †; of him who *is GOD over all, blessed for ever* ‡; of him *in whom dwells all the fullness of the GODHEAD bodily* ‖.—Permit me, brethren, to clear up and establish this doctrine; as it is a doctrine of the last importance; on which the very strength of our salvation is built; and from which the fullness of our consolation flows.

There are in *CHRIST*, in his one undivided person, two distinct natures. One nature is eternal, infinite, almighty; which is called by the apostle, *the form of GOD* ⸸. The other nature had a beginning; is limited as to extent, and limited as to power. This is termed by the apostle, *the seed of Abraham* ††.—As GOD, he is subject to no authority, and infinitely superior

* Rom. v. 17. † Zech. xiii. 7. ‡ Rom. ix. 5.
‖ Col. ii. 9. ⸸ Phil. ii. 6. †† Heb. ii. 16.

ſuperior to all poſſibility of ſuffering. To become capable of obeying, ſuffering, and dying, he humbled himſelf, and was found in faſhion as a man: that by obeying, ſuffering, and dying in human fleſh, he might triumph over ſin and Satan, in that very nature which Satan had overcome, and ſin had ruined: that, by accompliſhing all this in the room and ſtead of his people, he might bring many ſons unto glory; not without a full ſatisfaction to the rights of injured juſtice, and to the demands of a violated law.

JESUS CHRIST then, in his divine nature, is the moſt high GOD. The heaven of heavens is the auguſt palace, and royal reſidence, of this bleſſed and only Potentate. Thouſand thouſands miniſter unto him, and ten thouſand times ten thouſand ſtand before him. The church militant rely on him; the church triumphant adore him; while all the hoſts of angels pay homage to him. *JESUS CHRIST*, in his divine nature, is the majeſtic and adorable I AM; ſelf-exiſtent and independent. All worlds and all beings are derived wholly from him, and depend continually upon him: *he made the worlds, and upholdeth all things* *.—View the beauty, the magnificence, the harmony, obſervable in heaven, on earth, through the univerſe. All is intended, like the miracle wrought at Cana of Galilee, to *manifeſt his glory* †; to tell every one who has eyes to ſee, and a heart to underſtand, how great our SAVIOUR is, how ſublime his majeſty, and how marvellous his perfection. All things, ſays the SPIRIT of inſpiration, were created *by* him, and *for* him.—Judge then, whether the obedience and atonement of *ſuch* a REDEEMER are not ſufficient to ſecure, perfectly to ſecure any ſinner, every ſinner, all ſinners, that fly by faith under his wings. As perfectly ſufficient they are for this bleſſed purpoſe, as the unmeaſurable circuit of the ſkies is roomy enough for a lark to fly in, or as the immenſe orb of the ſun is beamy enough for a labourer to work by.

Behold

* Heb. i. 2, 3. † John ii. 11. ‡ Col. i. 16.

Behold now the dignity and excellency of this blood, which is your covert, your hiding-place, your ſtrong-hold. It has all the power and efficacy that every divine perfection can give it. It is the blood and righteouſneſs of him who is eternal, incomprehenſible, and exalted above all bleſſing and praiſe. Surely then nothing can bear any proportion to it. Guilt, all guilt, though ever ſo execrable and horrid, compared with the grandeur and riches of this invaluable blood *, is as

* St Chryſoſtom's explanation of a verſe lately quoted is ſo important in itſelf, and ſo appoſite to our purpoſe, exhibits ſuch a magnificent and delightful diſplay of *the ſalvation which is in CHRIST JESUS*, that I promiſe myſelf, the reader will allow me to preſent him with a tranſlation. *How much more ſhall they who receive abundance of grace, and of the gift of righteouſneſs, reign in life by one CHRIST JESUS!* Ουκ ειπεν ενταυθα Χαριν, &c. "The apoſtle ſays not, grace, but "*abundance of grace*. For we receive, not barely what may "ſuffice to obtain our pardon, but incomparably more. We "are delivered from all puniſhment, and from every evil. We "are juſtified, we are ſanctified, made the children of GOD, "and the brethren of his only begotten SON. We are "conſtituted heirs, joint-heirs with the PRINCE of hea-"ven. Yea, we become the members of his body; moſt in-"timately and indiſſolubly united to that divine head.

"All theſe privileges St Paul ſtyles *the abundance of grace:* "intimating, that the antidote is not only qualified to counter-"act and expel the poiſon, but is ſovereign alſo to eſtabliſh "health, to create beauty, to impart honour, and from the "moſt malignant of all evils, to produce the moſt diſtinguiſh-"ed bleſſings: any one of which, ſeparately conſidered, would "have been ſufficient to overcome and diſarm death; but, "under their *combined* influence, it is abſolutely deſtroyed, "it vaniſhes entirely away, and leaves not ſo much as a trace "of miſchief, or a ſhadow of terror.

"Let us ſuppoſe ſome poor debtor owing a conſiderable "ſum, and for want of payment, caſt into priſon. A gene-"rous friend, pitying his condition: diſcharges the whole debt, "and releaſes him from confinement: and not this only, but be-"ſtows upon him ſplendid apparel, with thouſands of ſilver and "gold; introduces him to court, and recommends him to the

"royal

as a glow-worm before the sun. All manner of sins and blasphemies are blotted out by such an expiation, as the shades of night are abolished by the light of day. Every sinner washed in this blood must be whiter than the unsullied wool, whiter than the virgin-snows. Every sinner clothed in this righteousness, must be unblameable and unreproveable, even before the eye of Omniscience itself.

For this, therefore, bless the LORD, O my soul; and all that is within me, bless his holy name. Bless the LORD, O my brethren; and let every thing that hath a being praise his unutterable grace. For *behold! GOD is our salvation*. GOD himself is made flesh, and become our sacrifice, our sin-offering, our justifying righteousness: *therefore will we trust, and not be afraid* *; trust in this infinitely-sufficient SAVIOUR; and not be afraid of death or hell, of any enemy or any evil.—But this leads me to apply the whole: which I shall do by way of

G 2 Examination,

" royal favour; procures his advancement to the highest ho-
" nours, and puts him in possession of the grandest prefer-
" ments. Where now is the disgrace of his imprisonment?
" and where are the distresses of his insolvent state?

" Such is the case with regard to us sinners, and our most
" gracious REDEEMER. He has paid inconceivably more
" than we either did or could possibly owe. Being GOD, the
" true GOD, the infinite and eternal GOD, his payment
" exceeds our debt, as much as the waters of the great deep
" exceed the small drop of a bucket.—Doubt not, therefore,
" poor sinner, that flieſt for refuge to this all-glorious SA-
" VIOUR; doubt not but thy sins, though more virulent
" than all plagues, are done away; and death, though he be
" the king of terrors, is abolished; this abolished, and those
" done away, before *such* grace and merit; even as a spark of
" fire is extinguished, when plunged into the abysses of the
" sea."—For, indeed, compared with a *divine* person, and an *infinite* righteousness, whatever guilt you have contracted, whatever thing you can name, is, as our devout orator speaks, ρανις μικρα προς πελαγις απειρον, *no more than a scanty drop compared with the boundless ocean*. Vid. Chrysost. in loc. * Is. xii. 2.

Examination,
Direction,
Exhortation,
Conſolation.

I. By way of *examination*. *Examine your own ſelves*, ſays the apoſtle *. Have you kept the paſſover? have *you* ſprinkled the blood?—Many, perhaps, will be ready to anſwer, "We have."—But beware, my friends, leaſt ye deceive your own ſouls. Let me give you a touch-ſtone, whereby you may try your ſpirit, and pronounce aright concerning your ſtate.

Have you been convinced of your *great ſinfulneſs?* of your ſinful nature and your ſinful practice? Have you been made ſenſible, that hell, the deepeſt hell, is your deſerved portion? is what you deſerve for any tranſgreſſion,—for every tranſgreſſion?—how much more for the many thouſands,—how much more for the many millions,—how much more for the numberleſs multitude of your provocations? If you have never been convinced of theſe moſt alarming, but certain truths: if you have never been touched with a ſenſe of your extreme guilt, and undone ſtate; I fear, you are ſettled upon your lees, you are in the dead ſleep of ſin. You are not ſo much as awakened; much leſs have you applied *CHRIST*.

Again, have you been made to ſee, that *nothing but CHRIST* and his precious blood, nothing but *CHRIST* and his divine righteouſneſs can be your ſecurity from vengeance? Have you been convinced, that thouſands of rams, and ten thouſands of rivers of oil, could never expiate the leaſt of your iniquities? that no tears, no confeſſions, no amendment, nothing but the ſacrifice of the body of *CHRIST*, can make your peace with GOD? If you have not been taught the abſolute inſufficiency of every remedy, ſave only the meritorious ſufferings of *JESUS CHRIST*;

* 2 Cor. xiii. 5.

CHRIST; you have not seen him, neither known him; much less is his blood sprinkled upon your conscience.

Once more, have you a supreme, a *matchless esteem* for *CHRIST?* Is *CHRIST* and his great salvation the thing that you long for? is he to your souls the pearl of great price? do you account all things but loss, that you may win *CHRIST*, and be found in him? If this is not the state of your soul, I dare not flatter you with vain hopes; I must not buoy you up with ungrounded imaginations. You are not, as yet, in your hiding place; neither have you fled to your strong-hold. All the courses of the divine law stand charged and pointed full against you. You have no security from being hurt by the first death, nor from being irrecoverably ruined by the second death. If judgments should come upon a sinful and backsliding people, you have no defence; there is no wall of fire around you. You must therefore expect to fall among those that fall; and, falling by the sword, may immediately drop into hell.

Can you hear this, and be unconcerned? can you listen to this warning, more awful than the voice of ten thousand thunders, and not start from your insensibility? are you not looking around, and ready to cry out, "What then shall I do to be safe in the day of "evil?"—O! that this inquiry came from the very bottom of your hearts. I should then proceed, with great chearfulness, to

2. A word of *direction*.—Fly to *CHRIST*, alarmed sinners. Come under the covert of his blood. Appropriate the blessed JESUS; look upon him and his merit as your own. Thus sprinkle his blood: sprinkle it upon your lintel and door-posts; upon all you are, upon all you have, and all you do; upon your consciences, that they may be purged; upon your souls, that they may be sanctified; upon your works, that they may be accepted.—Say, every one for himself,

"I

" I am a poor, guilty, helpleſs creature; but in *JESUS* " *CHRIST*, who is full of grace and truth, *I have* " *righteouſneſs and ſtrength* *.—I am a poor, polluted, " loathſome creature: but *JESUS CHRIST*, who " is the image of the inviſible GOD, and the bright- " neſs of his Father's glory, has *loved me, and waſhed* " *me from my filthineſs in his own blood* †.—I am by " nature a perverſe deprived creature; and, by evil " practice, a loſt damnable ſinner; but *JESUS* " *CHRIST*, who made the worlds; *JESUS* " *CHRIST* whom heaven and earth adore; even " *JESUS CHRIST* himſelf came from the man- " ſions of bliſs, on purpoſe *to ſeek* me, *to ſave* me ‡; " to give himſelf for me.—And how can I periſh, who " have ſuch a ranſom? how can I be undone, who " have ſuch a repairer of my breaches? how can I " come into condemnation, who have the blood, not " of ten thouſand ſacrifices; the merit, not of ten " thouſand angels, but the blood and merit of JE- " HOVAH himſelf, for my propitiation?"

Should you ſay, " Have I a warrant for ſuch a " truſt?"—You have the beſt of warrants, our LORD's expreſs *permiſſion: Whoſoever will, let him take the water of life freely* ‖. It is not ſaid, this or that perſon only, but *whoſoever;* including you and me; excluding no individual man or woman.—It is not ſaid, whoſoever is worthy, but whoſoever is *willing*. *Wilt thou be made whole?* was our LORD's queſtion to the impotent man at the pool of Bethesda. *Wilt thou*, all terms and conditions apart, inherit grace and glory? is his moſt benevolent addreſs to ſinful men, in all ages.—*Let him take the water of life;* let him receive ME and my righteouſneſs; let him look upon all that I have done and ſuffered, as done and ſuffered for *his* redemption. This will adminiſter peace of conſcience

* Iſ. xlv. 24. † Rev. i. 5. ‡ Matth. xviii. 11.
‖ Rev. xxii. 17.

ſcience, and joy in the HOLY GHOST: this will produce love of GOD, and alacrity of obedience; in which things the true *life* of the ſoul conſiſts.—All theſe bleſſings are to be received *freely*, without money, and without price: that is, without any good works, any good qualities, or any preparatory requiſites whatever: to be received, as the infinitely-rich gift of divine grace, vouchſafed even to the *loſt*—the *guilty*—the *undone*.

You have our LORD's moſt generous *invitation; Come unto ME.* And whom does he call? The righteous? No. The excellent? Quite the reverſe. He calls ſinners; miſerable ſinners; even the moſt miſerable of ſinners; thoſe who are *weary and heavy laden*; overwhelmed with iniquities; bowed down to the very brink of hell, and ready to think, "There is no "hope for them." Yet them he encourages; them he invites; to them he declares, *I will give you reſt* *; reſt in the enjoyment of peace with GOD, and peace in your own conſciences.—Obſerve and admire the riches of your REDEEMER's grace. He ſays not, Ye are vile wretches; polluted by ſin, and enſlaved to the devil; therefore keep at a diſtance; but, *therefore come*. Come, and be cleanſed by my blood; come, and be made free by my SPIRIT.—He ſays not, Furniſh yourſelves with this, or that, or the other recommending accompliſhment, but only come: come juſt as you are; poor, undone, guilty creatures. Yea, come to ME for pardon and recovery; to ME, who have given my life, myſelf, my all, for your ranſom.

Should you ſtill queſtion, whether theſe ineſtimable bleſſings are free for you? Remember, brethren, they are free for *ſinners*. Is this your character? Then they are as free for *your* acceptance, as for any perſon's in the world. *To us eternal life is given* †; not us who had deſerved it by our goodneſs, but us who had

* Matth. xi. 28. † 1 John v. 11.

had forfeited it by our sins.—*To you is preached the forgiveness of sins* * ; not you whose transgressions were inconsiderable, but you whose iniquities were more in number than the hairs of your head.—Even to you, who are the lost and perishing sinners of Adam's family, *is the word of this salvation sent* †. And, by a commission from GOD, we publish it ; that, as sinners, you may receive it ; that, receiving it, you may commence believers ; and *believing*, *may have life through his name* ‡.

Some, perhaps, will be inclined to debate ; "Is "this so extraordinary a matter ? will this exercise of "*believing* do such great things for us, or put us in "possession of such singular blessings ?—Moses might have formed the same scruple with regard to the *sprinkling of blood*. Will this seemingly insignificant circumstance be such an extraordinary safeguard to us ? will this preserve us from the impending blow, more effectually than the labours of the engineer, or the shield and spear of the warrior ?—But Moses consulted not with flesh and blood; Moses rejected all such carnal reasonings. *By faith* he and his people kept the passover, and were made partakers of the temporal salvation. *By faith* may you and I receive *CHRIST!* So shall we be partakers of pardon and eternal salvation.

By believing the promise of GOD, and by trusting in the person of *CHRIST*, we are united to the *LORD JESUS* ‖ ; so as to have a real interest in his blood and righteousness. Being united to *CHRIST*, our sins are done away, by virtue of his infinitely-precious atonement ; and eternal life becomes ours, on account of his everlasting righteousness.—Whoever thus believes, believes merely as a sinner, not upon the supposition of any goodness in himself, but upon the sole warrant of GOD's promise, in the infallible word

* Acts xiii. 38.
† Acts xiii. 26.
‡ John xx. 31.
‖ Eph. iii. 17.

word of the gospel. Such a person shall not be ashamed of his belief; shall never be disappointed of his hope; *according to his faith shall it be unto him* *:

Come then, fellow-sinners; believe the record of heaven. Set to your seal, that GOD is true. Honour his word, which cannot lie; honour his grace, which is absolutely free; honour his dear SON, who has obtained eternal redemption for such unworthy creatures as you and I. What shall hinder you?—But this leads me to,

3. A word of *exhortation*. I say then, what shall hinder you? what shall with-hold you a single moment, from believing? *since all things are ready* † in CHRIST JESUS. The great propitiation is made by him; the perfect obedience is performed by him; all the conditions of the new covenant are fulfilled by him. Come then, and partake of the heavenly blessings; as you partake of a marriage-feast, when the entertainment is all prepared, and the bridegroom bids you welcome.

Fain would I prevail in this most important address. LORD, make bare thy arm; incline their hearts; *make them willing in the day of thy power* ‡—My dear friends, if you turn away from such invitations, you are ruined to eternity: misery awaits you here, and damnation hereafter. Suffer me then to be importunate. Refuse not him that calleth you by my mouth; that bids you trust and not be afraid; that offereth himself, with all his fulness, to you.—Why are you backward? why slow of heart to believe? why do you stand at a distance from the all-gracious JESUS?

Is it because you are guilty wretches? Then he publishes the act of indemnity to you: *I, even I, am he that blotteth out your transgressions, for mine own sake* ‖.—Is it because you are polluted creatures; loathsome in your own eyes, and much more loathsome in the eye

* Matth. ix. 29. † Matth. xxii. 4. ‡ Psal. cx. 3. ‖ Is. xliii. 25.

eye of infinite purity? Then hear the word of the HOLY ONE: *I will ſprinkle clean water upon you, and ye ſhall be clean. From all your filthineſs, and from all your idols will I cleanſe you* *.—Is it becauſe your ſins are more numerous, and more hainous than the ſins of others? Be they ever ſo hainous, or ever ſo aggravated, thus ſaith the GOD of immenſely-rich grace in CHRIST; *Though your ſins be as ſcarlet, they ſhall be as white as ſnow; though they be red like crimſon, they ſhall be as wool* †.

Are you ſtill objecting, "I am weak; I have no "ſtrength; I cannot believe?"—Look then to a promiſing GOD, that he may help your unbelief; that he may fulfil in you all the good pleaſure of his will, and the work of faith with power. For he who is truth itſelf hath ſaid, *Your GOD will come and ſave you. Then ſhall the eyes of the blind be opened, and the ears of the deaf ſhall be unſtopped: the lame man ſhall leap as an hart, and the tongue of the dumb ſhall ſing* ‡.—Has the LORD given you a deſire to believe in his dear SON? doubt not but he will alſo give you the power. Does GOD the LORD bring to the birth, and not give ſtrength to bring forth? That be far from him! the ſuſpicion be far from us! He has, in unſpeakable mercy, appointed his bleſſed SPIRIT for this purpoſe. The HOLY GHOST, the Comforter, attendeth continually on this very thing; to teſtify of CHRIST, and to reveal CHRIST in our ſinful ſouls; enabling us to diſcern the all-ſufficiency of CHRIST, to diſcern our right to make uſe of CHRIST, and to receive CHRIST as our own—*our own* GOD and SAVIOUR.

Be it then your daily endeavour, your continual buſineſs, to believe; firmly, confidently, aſſuredly to believe in JESUS CHRIST, as the great and glorious REDEEMER, in whom *you* have pardon, *you* have

* Ezek. xxxvi. 25. † Iſ. i. 18. ‡ Iſ. xxxv. 4, 5, 6.

have righteouſneſs, and eternal life. Thus exerciſe yourſelves unto godlineſs, and *GOD will help you: GOD will ſtrengthen you; yea, GOD will uphold you with the right hand of his righteouſneſs.*—Thus exerciſe yourſelves unto godlineſs, depending on the divine faithfulneſs, proceeding upon the divine warrant, in obedience to the divine command, which expreſsly ſays, *Believe in the LORD your GOD, ſo ſhall ye be eſtabliſhed: believe his prophets, ſo ſhall ye proſper* *: *believe in his dear SON, ſo ſhall ye be ſaved* †.

Pharaoh ſaid to Joſeph, *Now thou art commanded, this do* ‡. Let me alſo ſay to my hearers, Now ye are allowed, invited, commanded, to believe in the SON of GOD, this do. 'Tis your grand concern; the one thing needful. Without this, nothing will profit you. Therefore I repeat my exhortation; therefore I am ſo urgent; therefore I cannot diſmiſs the ſubject, without beſeeching the FATHER of mercies to command a bleſſing upon the word; that you may indeed *believe* ‖ *unto righteouſneſs*, unto life, unto ſalvation. Thus will you glorify the ineffable goodneſs of GOD, and the ineſtimable merit of CHRIST: thus will you find a ſure, a full, an incomparably-rich proviſion made for your ſafety: and thus will you moſt effectually comply with that tender and gracious invitation of the LORD your GOD; *Come, my people, enter thou into thy chambers, and ſhut thy doors about thee: hide thyſelf as it were for a little moment, until the indignation be overpaſt. For behold! the LORD cometh out of his place, to puniſh the inhabitants of the earth for their iniquity* ⁂.

And what will ye do, when the LORD cometh forth to puniſh, if you are not received into the hiding-place?—What will ye do, ye men of *ſober* and *decent* converſation; who have nothing but an outward regularity, and ſome cuſtomary conformity to

* 2 Chron. xx. 20. † Acts xvi. 31.
‡ Gen. xlv. 19. ‖ Rom. x. 10 ⁂ Iſ. xxvi. 20, 21.

religious worship? These, though in their place valuable, yet are no security. They are only the outworks, not your fortification, nor your citadel. When the righteous Judge *shall be revealed from heaven in flaming fire, to take vengeance on them that obey not the gospel* *; these, without the blood of sprinkling, will be but as a withered leaf amidst the inextinguishable burning.

What will ye do, ye men of *wealth* and large possessions? *Will riches profit you in the day of wrath* †? will riches protect you in the day of the LORD's controversy? Alas! they will mark you out for a prey, and serve only to lure the vultures. If riches have been your idol; hoarded up in your coffers, or lavished out upon yourselves; they will, when the day of reckoning comes, be like the garment of pitch and brimstone, put upon the criminal condemned to the flames.

What will ye do, ye *mighty men* of valour? If the LORD turn his hand upon you, your heart shall fail, and your knees be feeble; your arm shall lose its strength, and your sword shall lose its edge. Your fleets and armies *shall be as tow*, and the commanders of them, *as a spark; and they shall both burn together, and none shall quench them* ‡.—If you are not sheltered and secured by *this* blood, what will ye do, when the shout of the archangel is made, and the trump of GOD is heard? Undaunted as you now seem, you will then, in an agony of despair, *call upon rocks to fall upon you, and mountains to cover you* ‖.

What will ye do, ye *voluptuous* men, and ye *careless* women? ye that eat the lambs out of the flock, and the calves out of the midst of the stall? ye that drink wine in bowls, and anoint yourselves with the chief ointments? Ah! what will ye do, when *the whole land*, for the universal degeneracy of its inhabitants, for their contempt of CHRIST, and neglect of grace, *shall become*

* 2 Thess. i. 7, 8.
† Prov. xi. 4.
‡ Is. i. 31.
‖ Rev. vi. 10.

become brimstone, and salt, and burning; insomuch that it shall not be sown, nor bear, nor any grass grow thereon *? Much more may I ask, What will ye do, when the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, when the elements shall melt with fervent heat, when the whole earth, and all the works that are therein, shall be burnt up?

What will ye do, people of *all* ranks and conditions, when *mischief shall come upon mischief, and rumour shall be upon rumour* †? when your houses shall be laid in heaps, and your streets be made a place of graves? when your cities, that were full of inhabitants, shall be solitary; and not a voice heard amidst them, but sighs of the disconsolate, and groans of the dying? when your children shall be slaughtered in one place, your parents in another; and the "slain shall lie be-"hind the slayer, as the sheaves ‡ behind the reaper "in the time of harvest?"—But, above all, what will ye do, when the great white throne is erected; when the earth and the heavens flee away from the face of him that sitteth thereon; and the dead, both small and great, stand before GOD to be judged? Without the blood of sprinkling, where can you be safe? how will you appear? what will you do?—Whereas, if *CHRIST* and his blood are yours, all is yours. You have nothing to fear, in time or eternity. "O! well "is it with you, and happy shall you be." But this reminds me of adding a word,

4. By way of *consolation*.—Possibly you may be ready to inquire, "What consolation will this administer, "amidst the presages, or under the approach, of na-"tional calamities?"—Very great. *Fear not*, says the LORD, *for I have redeemed thee* ‖. Redemption by *CHRIST* is a preservative from all terror, and an antidote against every evil. This causes the serene breast,

* Deut. xxix. 23.
† Ezek. vii. 26.
‡ Jer. ix. 22.
‖ Is. xliii. 1.

breaſt, and the lightſome heart. Hence comes calmneſs of conſcience, *quietneſs and aſſurance for ever*. Therefore, ſays the prophet, *This man ſhall be our peace when the Aſſyrian ſhall come into our land*. The blood and righteouſneſs of our incarnate GOD ſhall be the ſovereign ſupport of our ſouls, even when the enemy invades our territories, and preys upon the vitals of our country: yea, when he *treads upon our palaces* *; not only demoliſhes our dwelling-houſes, but lays our royal edifices in the duſt, and makes us feel all the grievouſneſs of war.

Further, when this blood is ſprinkled, ſin is done away, and GOD is appeaſed. His promiſes are your portion, and his arm is your defence. For the comfort of ſuch people it is written; *He ſhall deliver thee in ſix troubles; yea, in ſeven there ſhall no evil touch thee. In famine, he ſhall redeem thee from death; and in war, from the power of the ſword. Thou ſhalt be hid from the ſcourge of the tongue; neither ſhalt thou be afraid of deſtruction, when it cometh* †. In the hands of this reconciled and faithful CREATOR, this unwearied and almighty DELIVERER, how ſafely may you depoſit yourſelves and your families, your poſſeſſions and your all!

Be not then diſcouraged, ye followers of *CHRIST*, though troublous times ſhould come. All creatures, and all events, are under the control of your heavenly FATHER. If he has any further occaſion for your ſervice, or ſees it conducive to your good, he will preſerve you amidſt the greateſt dangers. He can draw a curtain of concealment over you, as he did over David in the cave ‡. He can plant an inviſible guard around you, as he did around Eliſha in Dothan ‖. He can turn the hearts of your adverſaries, and make even the enemy and the avenger to be at peace

* Mic. v. 5.
† Job v. 19, 20, 21.
‡ 1 Sam. xxiv. 3.
‖ 2 Kings vi. 17.

peace with you; as he did in the case of Jacob and his enraged brother Esau.—Or, if you fall in the common calamity, *your latter end shall be peace;* your inheritance is unalienable, and *your joy no man taketh from you.* Your best things, your eternal interests, are secure, inviolably secure, being *hid with CHRIST in GOD* *.

Happy, unspeakably blessed and happy the people, on whom this blood is sprinkled! If vindictive visitations come upon the land, this may screen and protect their persons; like the mark, which the man clothed with linen set on the forehead of GOD's chosen ones †; or like the line of scarlet thread, which Rahab the harlot bound to the window of her house ‡. However, by this blood of reconciliation, all afflictions shall be disarmed, and every evil unstung. Nay, *all things*, not in prosperity only, but in adversity likewise, *shall work together for good* ‖. Death, even death, is vanquished for them, and become their gain. And the last judgment is no longer the object of their dread, but their unspeakable privilege. Being justified by this blood, they may even *glory in tribulation, and rejoice in hope*, in sure and stedfast hope *of the glory of GOD* §.

Will ye not then, brethren, ardently join with me? while

* Col. iii. 3. † Ezek. xi. 6. ‡ Josh. ii. 18, 19.

‖ *Rom.* viii. 28. This seems to be the meaning of the HOLY GHOST, in the passage lately quoted from Job. *In six*, in manifold and various *troubles GOD shall deliver thee.* Or, if he suffer thee to be involved *in seven, there shall no evil*, no penal evil, *touch thee.* His gracious presence shall be more than deliverance. Thou shalt not feel *anguish*, but enjoy *comfort*; thou shalt not suffer *harm*, but receive *benefit.* Though the flames of tribulation kindle all around, they shall not consume thee; but (like the fire which surrounded the three Hebrew confessors) shall only loose thy bonds, and set thee free; set thy affections free from a troublesome world, or set thy soul free from a prison of clay.

§ Rom. v. 1, 2, 3.

while I lift my voice to GOD in the heavens, and say, "Awake, awake, O arm of the LORD; let this be a "day of thy power, and a day of our redemption. "Behold, O GOD our SAVIOUR, and look upon "thy various congregations. See what a gathering "of the people there is in thy courts; let there be as "great a gathering of souls to thy blessed self. Ful-"fil the prophecy, almighty SHILOH! Let sinners, "won by the discovery of thy grace, fly unto thee "as a cloud; and take shelter in thy wounds, as the "doves in their windows! that they may rest in the "day of trouble; and, when time shall be no more, "may enter into that everlasting rest, which remain-"eth for the people of GOD." *Amen.*

SER-

SERMON III.

The Way of Holineſs.

EZEK. xviii. 27.

When the wicked man turneth away from his wickedneſs that he hath committed, and doth that which is lawful and right, he ſhall ſave his ſoul alive.

MANY of my hearers, I obſerve, are huſbandmen; and the ſeaſon, if I miſtake not, is the ſeaſon of *ſeed-time*. I will ſuppoſe a perſon, unſkilled in your buſineſs, brethren, taking notice of your work. Perhaps he goes home, and ſays,—"What ſtrange "inconſiderate creatures have I ſeen in the field! I "ſaw them, inſtead of laying up their corn in the "garner, throwing it away by handfuls. Nay, they "even buried it in the ground, and left it to putrefy "under the clods. Is this the way to improve their "ſtock, and increaſe their ſubſtance? is this the "way to get gain, and provide for their families?"

Should any one make ſuch a reflection on your conduct, you have an anſwer ready. The ſame anſwer, only with an alteration of circumſtances, will be equally proper for your preacher. It is true, his uſual ſubjects are, the abſolutely free-grace of GOD, and

the immenſely-rich merits of CHRIST; the infinite atonement, and everlaſting righteouſneſs of the REDEEMER. But becauſe he generally enlarges upon theſe doctrines, is he therefore throwing away his words? does he *neglect* the cauſe, or *diſregard* the intereſts of *holineſs?* Far from it. He is ſowing the ſeed of vital holineſs; without which ſeed, holineſs will never flouriſh in your hearts, will never bring forth fruit in your lives; any more than your ploughed lands would produce a crop of corn, without receiving the appointed grain. It is *through the knowledge of our* adorable SAVIOUR, *as calling us to glory and virtue*, that *we have all things pertaining unto life and godlineſs* *; unto the enjoyment of life eternal, and the practice of true godlineſs.

To convince you that this is my aim, I have choſen a text full to the purpoſe; and not unſuitable to the occaſion of our preſent aſſembly. *When the wicked man turneth away from his wickedneſs, that he hath committed, and doth that which is lawful and right, he ſhall ſave his ſoul alive.*

The words naturally divide themſelves into the following particulars:

I. What the wicked man ſhould turn *from—wickedneſs.*

II. What he ſhould turn *to—to do that which is lawful and right.*

III. What will be the *effect* of ſuch turning—*he ſhall ſave his ſoul alive.*

May CHRIST JESUS, the Head of his church, and the wonderful Counſellor, enable us to open theſe truths; to add a word of lively application; and to receive godly edifying from the whole!

I. What the wicked man ſhould turn *from*—wickedneſs.

* 2 Pet. i. 3.

neſs. Here perhaps you expect, that I ſhould mention ſeveral ſorts of wickedneſs; ſhould diſplay the deteſtable nature and deſtructive conſequences of each; and deter you, by ſuch conſiderations, from the commiſſion of them all; deter you from lying and defrauding, from curſing and ſwearing, from drunkenneſs and uncleanneſs, from a ſpiteful temper, and a backbiting tongue. Theſe are horrid evils. On account of theſe the land mourns. Theſe bring the vengeance of GOD on a perſon, and on a people *. If I could ſpeak in thunder, I could never inveigh too loudly againſt theſe vices. "Ye that go on in ſuch iniquities, "ye are *ſcattering brimſtone upon your habitations* †; "ye are *heaping up wrath againſt the day of wrath* ‡. "*How can ye eſcape the damnation of hell* ‖?"

But let me forbear invectives. Let me reaſon with you in the ſpirit of mildneſs.—I will ſuppoſe you poſſeſſed of a pleaſant garden. In ſome favourite bed, many weeds ſpring up, alluring to the eye, but full of deadly poiſon. Will you order your gardener, to crop off the *leaves*, or to pluck up the *roots*?—To pluck up the roots, moſt certainly. Becauſe, if he does the former only, it will avail but little; it will be no better than labour loſt; whereas, if he does the latter, he will effectually rid your ground of the pernicious incumbrance.—Thus would I act. Wickedneſs is this *pernicious* weed. It is full of deadly poiſon; it pollutes your ſouls, and will be the bane of your happineſs. I would not therefore be content with uſing the pruning-knife, and cutting off the ſhoots; but I would take the ſpade, and level my blow at the root.

I would fain have you turn, not partially and ſuperficially, but *thoroughly* and *habitually*;—not from ſome only, but from *all* wickedneſs;—and not barely

* Col. iii. 6.
† Job xviii. 15.
‡ Rom. ii. 5.
‖ Matth. xxiii. 33.

from the practice, but even from the *love* of it, and nay *fondneſs* for it.—This will never be accompliſhed, unleſs you turn

From a *thoughtleſs*
From a *prayerleſs* } ſtate
From an *inſenſible*

1. From a *thoughtleſs* ſtate.—You are made for eternity; you are immortal beings. You muſt dwell either with GOD in heaven, or with devils in hell; and that to endleſs, endleſs ages. You know not how ſoon you may be ſummoned into the inviſible and eternal world; the following night, for aught you can tell; or before the preſent hour is expired. Do you ſeriouſly conſider, to which of theſe everlaſting abodes you are approaching? for which of theſe unchangeable conditions you are meet?

Except a man be born again, ſays our LORD, *he cannot enter into the kingdom of heaven* *. This is the fixed determination of the righteous Judge. You all hope for heaven; and I humbly beſeech the LORD that you may not be diſappointed of your hope. But do you diligently inquire, whether you have experienced this new birth? Is there a ſpiritual change wrought in your ſouls? are your affections taken off from vanity, and fixed on the infinitely-amiable GOD? is your memory filled with the truths of the goſpel, and are your deſires riſing to things above? To expect the bleſſedneſs of heaven, and have no concern about this renewal of your nature, is to contemn the counſels of CHRIST, and to trifle with his unalterable decree.

Without holineſs no man ſhall ſee the LORD †. This is the ſtanding rule for our preſent conduct, and indiſpenſibly neceſſary for our future happineſs. You may be civil and decent in your behaviour; you may attend the place of divine worſhip, and paſs for reputable

* John iii. 3. † Heb. xii. 14.

putable persons; yet, unless you are holy in your hearts, and holy in your conversation, you cannot enter into GOD's blissful presence. To be holy is to *put on CHRIST* *; to resemble CHRIST, in your spirit and carriage, as one man resembles another, when he puts on his dress, or imitates his manners. Do you look to CHRIST as your pattern; follow CHRIST as your guide; and, in the general course of your life, walk as CHRIST walked?—Perhaps you have never so much as aimed at this; never so much as seriously considered eternity, regeneration, and a conformity to CHRIST. These things are seldom, if ever, in your thoughts: then be assured you are far from holiness; you are not turned from your evil way; no, nor so much as *beginning* to turn.

Say not, "This duty of serious consideration is a "slight matter. If I had been guilty of injustice or "perjury; if I had committed adultery or murder; "these indeed were heinous crimes: whereas, the "omission which you have insisted on, is but a small "offence."—*Small offence!* Presume not to think so. However such guilt may appear little in your view, or sit easy upon your conscience, it is hainous enough to make heaven and earth amazed. For *thus saith the LORD; Hear, O heavens, and give ear, O earth! I have nourished and brought up children, and they have rebelled against me. The ox knoweth his owner, and the ass his master's crib: but Israel doth not know, my people* DOTH NOT CONSIDER †. To say the truth, an inconsiderate careless life is an unintermitted course of sin; it is one continued act of rebellion against GOD.—It opposes his compassionate wish; *O that they were wise! that they understood this! that they would consider their latter end* ‡!—It disobeys his positive command; *Thus saith the LORD of hosts*, the supreme Ruler of the world, *Consider your ways* ‖.—It defeats the design of

* Rom. xiii. 14.
† Is. i. 2, 3.
‡ Deut. xxxii. 29.
‖ Hag. i. 5, 7.

of his holy word, and would make the blood of his SON to be of none effect.

2. Turn from a *prayerleſs* ſtate. Alas! how many of thoſe whom we call Chriſtians are ſtrangers to prayer! How many *ſervants* riſe to their work, and never bend a knee before their MASTER in heaven! how many *maſters* ſet their ſervants an ungodly example; enter upon the affairs of the day, without imploring the GOD of all grace, either to proſper their buſineſs, or to ſanctify their ſouls! How many *parents* know not what it is to make earneſt ſupplications for the converſion and ſalvation of their children! and how many *children* are as ignorant of the nature, the neceſſity, the advantages of prayer, "as the wild aſs's "colt *!"

Shall I reckon *theſe* good people? are theſe turned to their GOD? No; they are deſpiſers of the Moſt HIGH; they caſt contempt upon his majeſty. The language of their practice is, "Depart from us. "Omnipotent as thou art, we have no need of thee; "no need of thy SPIRIT, to make interceſſion *in* "us; no need of thy SON, to make interceſſion *for* "us."—Moſt juſtly, therefore, is it reckoned by Eliphaz, as part of a wicked and abandoned character, *Thou reſtraineſt prayer before GOD* †. Nay, it is mentioned by the Pſalmiſt as the finiſhing part, that which ſeals up the ſoul under the dominion of iniquity, and ſhuts out all reaſonable hope of a reformation: *They are corrupt; they do abominable works;* and there is no proſpect of their doing otherwiſe, ſince *they call not upon the LORD* ‡.

Religious, yet neglect prayer! Impoſſible. Can a man live without food? can he breathe without air? No more can you withſtand temptation, or exerciſe godlineſs, unleſs you *watch unto prayer* ‖.—The neglect of

* Job xi. 12.
† Job xv. 4.
‡ Pſal. xiv. 4.
‖ Eph. vi. 18.

of prayer is not only sinful in itself, but the sure sign of an unsanctified heart, and the wide inlet to every unrighteous practice. "Shew me a prayerless person," said one, "and I will shew you a graceless person."—Turn then, sinners, turn, without delay, to a habit of prayer; of secret, serious, earnest prayer: otherwise, you cannot expect that the wrath of GOD should be turned away from you. No; when he whets his glittering sword, and his hand takes hold on judgment, *you* are the persons that cause the indignation; *you* are the persons who have reason to tremble at the stroke. For thus it is written in that venerable book, which is a transcript of the divine will, and the rule of the divine procedure; *Pour out thy fury upon the Heathen, that know thee not; pour out thy fury upon the families that call not on thy name* *.

3. Turn from your *insensible* state.—Be sensible of your guilt, your misery, your ruin. Thoughtless and prayerless people, you are sinners before the GOD of heaven; you are the children of his wrath; you are the objects of his vengeance; condemned and accursed by his holy word. O! may the LORD of all power rend the veil from your understandings, and shew you your perilous, your dreadfully-perilous condition.

If, while I am speaking, the *earth* should *reel* to and fro, and be in strong convulsions under your feet; if it should open its horrid jaws, and gape frightfully wide to devour you; not one in the assembly but would be greatly alarmed. How then can you be careless and unconcerned, when hell from beneath is opening her mouth to swallow you up in endless perdition?—If this building was *rocking* over your heads, and tottering on every side; if the beams were bursting, and the walls cleaving; you would be struck with astonishment and horror. And how is it that you

* Jer. x. 25.

pleased the FATHER, that in CHRIST should all fulness dwell *.

Because you are *guilty*, and have a burden of iniquity on your souls, HE is *the Lamb of GOD, that taketh away the sin of the world* †: a lamb of GOD's own appointing; a lamb of infinite excellence and dignity; to whom nothing is equal, nothing comparable. This Lamb of GOD has shed his blood for sinners; has suffered death for sinners; yea, has died in their stead, and endured all that vengeance which they have deserved. In this most wonderful and perfect manner has he obtained their pardon! pardon, not of some only, but of all sins; be they ever so numerous, or ever so hainous, it maketh no difference with him. An infinite SAVIOUR taketh away millions, unnumbered millions of the most abominable iniquities, with as much ease as he expiates a single offence, or the smallest fault. *He blotteth out transgressions*, aggravated transgressions, innumerable transgressions, *as a cloud* ‡; as easily and as completely as the wind sweeps away a floating cloud from the face of the sky. Delivered from this load of guilt, you will be fitted to *walk* in the way of God's commandments, *and not be weary; yea, to run, and not faint* ||.

Because you are ruined, and have nothing that may recommend you to the most high GOD, *CHRIST* has brought in a righteousness—a complete righteousness—a divine righteousness. Consider the unspotted purity of his nature, and the unsinning obedience of his life; consider his fervent charity to man, and his patient resignation to GOD; consider all his exalted virtues, and all his exemplary actions; these, all these, in their utmost perfection, are not only for the imitation, but for the justification also, of such sinners as you and I. *His name is JEHOVAH*, which speaks incomprehensible grandeur in him; *JEHOVAH our righteousness*,

* Col. i. 19. † John i. 29. ‡ Is. xliv. 22. || Is. xl. 31.

neſs *, which ſpeaks unutterable comfort to us. In this righteouſneſs we may be fully accepted, and entitled to eternal life. Of this we may make our boaſt, and ſay, *In the LORD have I righteouſneſs* †; I, a tranſgreſſor, have a real righteouſneſs; I, a defective creature, have a conſummate righteouſneſs; I, a frail relapſing Chriſtian, have an invariable and everlaſting righteouſneſs. O! what a treaſure is this! what an unſpeakable gift is this! Is there a cordial that can revive our ſpirits, is there a motive that can animate us to duty, like juſtification through IMMANUEL's righteouſneſs?—Bleſſed LORD! this makes thy yoke eaſy, and thy burden light.

Becauſe you are weak and *diſabled*, *CHRIST* has the *reſidue* of the SPIRIT ‡; the *fulneſs* of the SPIRIT ‖; the *ſeven SPIRITS* of GOD are before his throne ⊥. The HOLY GHOST, in all his operations, and with all his graces, *CHRIST* ſends to whomſoever he pleaſes ++.—He gave this ineſtimable bleſſing to Saul the perſecutor and blaſphemer: he gave this ineſtimable bleſſing to many of his murderers and crucifiers: he ſtill confers the heavenly gift on his enemies; *yea, on the rebellious alſo* ++. And the promiſe, the free gracious promiſe, *is to you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the LORD* our *GOD*, by the preaching of his goſpel, *ſhall call* ++.

How ſalutary and beneficial are the effects of this gift! our LORD himſelf, who beſt knew, has admirably ſhewn. *He that believeth on ME, out of his belly ſhall flow rivers of living water* ==. This ſpake he of the SPIRIT, which every one that turns to him, and believes on him, ſhall receive. Obſerve ſome beautiful and copious river: how it exhilarates the country, and fructifies the ſoil through which it paſſes; beſtows a thouſand conveniencies, and gives birth to a thouſand

 delights,

* Jer. xxiii. 6. † Iſ. xlv. 24. ‡ Mal. ii. 15.
‖ Col. i. 19 ⊥ Rev. ii. 4. ++ John xvi. 7.
++ Pſal. lxviii. 18. ++ Acts i. 39. == John vii. 38.

pleased the FATHER, that in CHRIST should all fulness dwell *.

Because you are *guilty*, and have a burden of iniquity on your souls, HE is *the Lamb of GOD, that taketh away the sin of the world* †: a lamb of GOD's own appointing; a lamb of infinite excellence and dignity; to whom nothing is equal, nothing comparable. This Lamb of GOD has shed his blood for sinners; has suffered death for sinners; yea, has died in their stead, and endured all that vengeance which they have deserved. In this most wonderful and perfect manner has he obtained their pardon! pardon, not of some only, but of all sins; be they ever so numerous, or ever so hainous, it maketh no difference with him. An infinite SAVIOUR taketh away millions, unnumbered millions of the most abominable iniquities, with as much ease as he expiates a single offence, or the smallest fault. *He blotteth out transgressions*, aggravated transgressions, innumerable transgressions, *as a cloud* ‡; as easily and as completely as the wind sweeps away a floating cloud from the face of the sky. Delivered from this load of guilt, you will be fitted to *walk* in the way of God's commandments, *and not be weary; yea, to run, and not faint* ‖.

Because you are ruined, and have nothing that may recommend you to the most high GOD, *CHRIST* has brought in a righteousness—a complete righteousness—a divine righteousness. Consider the unspotted purity of his nature, and the unsinning obedience of his life; consider his fervent charity to man, and his patient resignation to GOD; consider all his exalted virtues, and all his exemplary actions; these, all these, in their utmost perfection, are not only for the imitation, but for the justification also, of such sinners as you and I. *His name is JEHOVAH*, which speaks incomprehensible grandeur in him; *JEHOVAH our righteousness*,

* Col. i. 19. † John i. 29. ‡ Is. xliv. 22. ‖ Is. xl. 31.

neſs *, which ſpeaks unutterable comfort to us. In this righteouſneſs we may be fully accepted, and entitled to eternal life. Of this we may make our boaſt, and ſay, *In the LORD have I righteouſneſs* †; I, a tranſgreſſor, have a real righteouſneſs; I, a defective creature, have a conſummate righteouſneſs; I, a frail relapſing Chriſtian, have an invariable and everlaſting righteouſneſs. O! what a treaſure is this! what an unſpeakable gift is this! Is there a cordial that can revive our ſpirits, is there a motive that can animate us to duty, like juſtification through IMMANUEL's righteouſneſs?—Bleſſed LORD! this makes thy yoke eaſy, and thy burden light.

Becauſe you are weak and *diſabled*, *CHRIST* has the *reſidue* of the SPIRIT ‡; the *fulneſs* of the SPIRIT ‖; the *ſeven SPIRITS* of GOD are before his throne ⊥. The HOLY GHOST, in all his operations, and with all his graces, *CHRIST* ſends to whomſoever he pleaſes +.—He gave this ineſtimable bleſſing to Saul the perſecutor and blaſphemer: he gave this ineſtimable bleſſing to many of his murderers and crucifiers: he ſtill confers the heavenly gift on his enemies; *yea, on the rebellious alſo* ++. And the promiſe, the free gracious promiſe, *is to you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the LORD* our *GOD*, by the preaching of his goſpel, *ſhall call* ==.

How ſalutary and beneficial are the effects of this gift! our LORD himſelf, who beſt knew, has admirably ſhewn. *He that believeth on ME, out of his belly ſhall flow rivers of living water* =. This ſpake he of the SPIRIT, which every one that turns to him, and believes on him, ſhall receive. Obſerve ſome beautiful and copious river: how it exhilarates the country, and fructifies the ſoil through which it paſſes; beſtows a thouſand conveniencies, and gives birth to a thouſand

 delights,

* Jer. xxiii. 6. † Iſ. xlv. 24. ‡ Mal. ii. 15.
‖ Col. i. 19 ⊥ Rev. ii. 4. + John xvi. 7.
++ Pſal. lxviii. 18. == Acts i. 39. = John vii. 38.

delights, where-ever it takes its winding courſe. So the COMFORTER dwelling in the heart, gives ſuch charming views of CHRIST and his unſearchable riches, as gladden the conſcience, and make us truly happy. Hence, as from an inexhauſtible ſource, true holineſs flows, and every ſpiritual good. This diſpoſes us to love our neighbour; this teaches us to be meek in ſpirit: and this will raiſe our deſires far above earthly, ſenſual, tranſitory things, even as David's thoughts were raiſed far above the ſhepherd's ſcrip, when he ſat exalted on the throne of Iſrael.

Under the influence of this divine SPIRIT, you will ſay, "CHRIST has taken away the execrable "filth of my ſins; and ſhall I wallow in the mire of "iniquity again?—CHRIST has delivered me from "the pit of everlaſting deſtruction; and ſhall I leap "into thoſe unquenchable flames, from which, as a "brand, I have been ſnatched?—In my adorable "REDEEMER, I have a perfect righteouſneſs, "and am completely juſtified; and ſhall I not endea-"vour to walk worthy of ſuch favours; to ſhew my "gratitude for ſuch beneficence, by bringing forth "the fruits of righteouſneſs in all my converſa-"tion?"

Yes, brethren; when you are turned to *CHRIST*, to receive his atonement, to rely on his righteouſneſs, to be filled with his SPIRIT; it will be with your ſoul as it is with the *earth*, when it is turned to the *ſun*. The earth, you ſee, is now barren and unfruitful, becauſe it has been very much withdrawn from the enlivening beams of the ſun. Ere long it will be replaced under the full influences of that fountain of light and heat. Then what a change will take place! how will the flowers appear on the ground! how will the leaves adorn the trees! how will the ſinging of birds be heard in our land! So ſhall holineſs and a heavenly temper be produced in your ſouls; ſo ſhall obedience, with all the fruits of godlineſs, flouriſh in your

your lives; when this *Sun of righteousness* manifests himself in your hearts, makes you partakers of his salvation, and thus *arises upon you with healing under his wings* *.

Should any one doubt, whether this is the way to do that which is lawful and right; I ask,—Is it not a *pleasing* way? such as we should wish for; such as we should prefer above all others; and such as will render our *LORD*'s service perfect freedom?—Is it not a *rational* way? apparently adapted to engage the heart, to strengthen the hand, and thereby to fit the whole man for every good work?

Besides, is it not the way appointed by GOD?—Would we "earnestly *repent*, and be heartily sorry "for all our misdoings?" The wisdom of GOD assures us, this sorrow must arise from believing views of *CHRIST*; from *looking unto him whom we have pierced* †; looking unto him as wounded for *our* transgressions, and bruised for *our* iniquities. This, if any thing, will incline us to be afflicted, and mourn, and weep, for all our abominations. Thus, and thus only, shall we experience that *godly sorrow, which worketh repentance not to be repented of.*

Would we *love* GOD? The oracles of heaven inform us, that we must first see his love; his infinitely-free, and infinitely-tender love towards us; his love not imputing any sin to our souls, but laying all our iniquities upon his own SON. Then shall *we love him*, when we perceive and know, that *he has*, in this most divinely gracious manner, regarded—*loved*—blessed us.

Would we be *pure* in heart? The LORD *purifieth the heart by faith* ‡: faith in *CHRIST*, as shedding his most precious blood, as giving his most glorious person, for our ransom: and, by his one oblation, *finishing our transgression; making reconciliation for our iniquity;*

* Mal. iv. 2. † Zech. xii. 10. ‡ Acts xv. 9.

iniquity; yea, *perfecting us for ever:* insomuch that we may boldly and assuredly say, *Through this grace of our LORD JESUS CHRIST we shall be saved.* He that hath this faith and this hope *purifieth himself, even as he is pure.*

Would we *renounce all ungodliness?* would we *live soberly, righteously, and godlily* *? By grace we must be enabled; even that grace which brings salvation, a finished and free salvation to sinners. That grace, appearing in the heart, and appropriated by faith, is the sure, the effectual means of true sanctification; the sure, the effectual motive to willing obedience.—Therefore our LORD says, *He that eateth me, even he shall live by me* †. *He that eateth me*, that receiveth my righteousness and redemption; that maketh a daily use of me and my benefits, for the refreshment and health of his soul; as people make a daily use of their necessary food, for the nourishment and support of their bodies: *even he shall live by me;* he shall live to GOD in real holiness here, and live with GOD in everlasting glory hereafter.—This method will strengthen and prepare us for discharging all the duties of a Christian life, as bread strengthens and prepares the labourer for dispatching the business of his toilsome calling. Whereas, without using this sovereign expedient, we shall be as incapable of exercising ourselves unto godliness, as the hireling, deprived of his usual meals, would be incapable of performing his daily task.

Upon the whole, brethren, we do not urge you to make brick without straw: we do not call upon you to arise and work, without shewing you from whence your ability and vigour are to proceed.—Some, perhaps, might exhort you to all holy obedience; but, neglecting these most necessary directions, their exhortations would be comfortless and insignificant; because

* Tit. ii. 12. † John vi. 57.

cause you might fetch a sigh, and may answer, "All "this we would gladly do, but alas! we are not able." Whereas here is grace sufficient for you in *CHRIST*. —Whatever hinders you, *CHRIST* removes; whatever you want, *CHRIST* bestows: *that, being delivered from your enemies, and from the hand of all that hate you;* from the influence of all that embarrasses, and all that discourages you; *you may serve him, without* slavish or disquieting *fear, in holiness and righteousness before him, all the days of your life* *.

Happy deliverance! thrice happy conduct! but happier still the issue of all!—Which reminds me of my last inquiry; namely,

III. What will be the effect of this turning?—*He*, the wicked man, thus turned, *shall save his soul alive.*

He shall *save*—Safety shall be his companion; safety shall be his guard; safety shall escort him through the dangers of life. All the days of his appointed time *he shall dwell under the defence of the Most HIGH, and abide under the shadow of the ALMIGHTY* †.—Most desirable situation! especially when judgments, desolating and destructive judgments, are abroad.—While the storm of calamity is gathering, or when the tempest of tribulation is raging, O! what a calm must it create in the heart, to have the eternal GOD for our refuge ‡! to say within ourselves, "The hand that *is* "*stretched over the sea, and shakes the kingdoms* of the "earth; "the hand that *rends the mountains*, and *scat*-"*ters the everlasting hills* ‖; that hand is my defence "and my shield!"

Save his *soul*—It is not improbable, but his bodily welfare may be secured. GOD may set a mark upon his forehead, and command the sword of the destroying angel to pass over his house. But however this

* Luke i. 74, 75.
† Psal. xci. 1.
‡ Deut. xxxiii. 27.
‖ Hab. iii. 6.

this may be determined, his ſoul ſhall be ſafe. As to his ſpiritual welfare, he has a *writ of protection* under the great ſeal of heaven. The *LORD JESUS* is his ever faithful guardian, and *none ſhall pluck him out of the divine REDEEMER's hand* *. The roaring lion may go about, ſeeking to devour him: but he has a ſtrong city, which the infernal adverſary cannot ſtorm; he has an impregnable bulwark, which the powers of darkneſs cannot ſcale. Though he fall, the arm of *CHRIST* will raiſe him; though he be defiled, the blood of *CHRIST* will cleanſe him; though he die, it will be no loſs, but gain. HE that has the keys of the grave, will give commandment concerning his mouldering bones; HE that lives for evermore, will receive his departing ſoul.—This, perhaps, may be meant by that other emphatical word, *alive;*

He ſhall ſave his ſoul *alive*—He ſhall not barely be ſafe, but happy. He ſhall enjoy what truly deſerves the name of life. A man may eſcape from his enemy, by flying to a fortified caſtle: but in the caſtle there may be drought and famine. He may periſh by theſe diſaſters, though preſerved from the purſuing foe. It ſhall not be thus with the returning, believing, renewed ſinner. He ſhall be ſaved with a complete and everlaſting ſalvation. He is a child of GOD, and an heir of glory: he ſhall rejoice in *CHRIST JESUS* here, and ſhall enter into the joy of his LORD hereafter.—When the earth is burnt up, he ſhall ſee it; when the heavens paſs away, he ſhall ſtand with boldneſs; when all nature ſinks into diſſolution, he ſhall not only ſurvive, but enjoy the ruin. He ſhall leave a diſſolving world, to poſſeſs a kingdom in heaven; to wear a crown of righteouſneſs; and to be for ever with, for ever like, his bleſſed and glorious LORD.

We

* John x. 28.

We have now shewn—what the wicked man should turn *from*,—what he should turn *to*,—what will be the *effect* of this turning.—Give me leave to ask, Has the arm of the LORD been revealed? are you impressed by the awful, or encouraged by the comfortable truths? If so, perhaps you will be ready to say, "Will "*CHRIST* receive *me*? will he make *me* a partaker "of these incomparable benefits? shall such a one, "who is so very *unworthy*, find favour in his sight?"

Yes, such a one may find favour. Any one, every one who comes, he will receive. He sends his ministers to *invite* you; he sends his judgments to *compel* you; he uses every expedient to *gain* you.—He bids earthquakes tear the foundations of nature, and turn mighty cities into ruinous heaps, that you may be built on that rock which shall never be shaken. He calls the sword of war out of its scabbard, and commands it to be bathed in blood, that you may fly for safety to the Prince of peace. While ruin and desolation are pursuing their dreadful work all around, he throws open the doors of his grace and righteousness, and most compassionately cries, "Come, my people; "come, poor offenders; enter into these chambers, "and find rest *."

Is any of you still inclined to reply, "Will *CHRIST* "indeed receive me, who am not only a sinner,—but "a *great* sinner,—a *long persisting* sinner,—and now "seem to come but at the *last hour*; more like one "driven by fear, than drawn by love?"—What thinkest thou? would the widow of Nain, who went mourning after the corpse of her only son, almost inconsolable with her loss; would she be unwilling to receive him, when our LORD re-animated the cold clay, and *delivered him* alive *to his mother* †? Would she need much importunity, and hardly be prevailed on, to embrace her beloved, her lamented child? Impossible to

* Is. xxvi. 20. † Luke vii. 15.

to ſuppoſe. Remember what *CHRIST* has *done* for ſinners; what he has *ſuffered* for ſinners; how his bowels *yearn* over ſinners; and it will appear equally impoſſible that he ſhould reject any returning profligate.

Reject! No. The good father, aged and venerable as he was, haſtened; yea, *ran* to meet the prodigal. He fell on his neck, and tenderly kiſſed the diſſolute youth *. So, with ſuch readineſs, and ſuch compaſſion, will the everlaſting FATHER receive you to his family, his favour, his love.—Nay more, he will receive you with *joy*. He is the good Shepherd; you are the loſt ſheep: he is come, in his word, to ſeek you; when you turn to him, he has found you. Then, ſays the ſcripture, the good ſhepherd goes home with his recovered ſheep, *rejoicing* †. O let your miniſter, and (which is unſpeakably more engaging) let the bleſſed *JESUS* have joy of you, my brethren: even that *JESUS* by whom ſinners are *dearly beloved and longed for* ‡; who has no greater delight than to ſave them from their iniquities, and number them among his children.

If you ſhould anſwer,—"This is a matter of the "utmoſt importance. It lies at the very root of all "my comfort. Let me hear it confirmed from our "LORD's own mouth. *I will hearken what the "LORD GOD will ſay concerning me* ‖."

Hear then his own *promiſe;* the moſt precious promiſe that words can form, or fancy conceive; *Whoſoever cometh to me*, for pardon, for juſtification, for holineſs, *I will in no wiſe caſt him out* §.—*Whoſoever;* whether he be high or low, learned or illiterate; whether he be a ſervant or a maſter, a prince or a beggar; no one is excepted, no one ſhall be refuſed. *In no wiſe:* on no conſideration of paſt tranſgreſſions, on

* Luke xv. 20. † Luke xv. 5. ‡ Philip. iv. 1.
‖ Pſal. lxxxv. 8. § John vi. 37.

on no account of present depravity, on no foreknowledge of future failings. Only let him come, *only let him come*, and nothing shall debar him from the enjoyment of my benefits; nothing shall separate him from the endearments of my love.

Hear his kind *invitation; Return unto me, for I have redeemed you* *. Ye that have hitherto been strangers to seriousness, and always alienated from me; *turn unto me*, and I will not so much as upbraid you † with your folly.—Ye that are now backsliders, and have for a season ungratefully departed from me; *turn unto me*, and I will heal your backslidings; my stripes shall make you whole.—Ye that have been slaves to vice; have sold yourselves to work wickedness; and are grown old in abominable practices; it is not too late even for you. *I have redeemed* even such as *you*.—I shake the pillars of nature, and rock the foundations of the world; *I clothe the heavens with blackness, and I make sackcloth their covering* ‡. Yet, for such as you, *I gave my back to the smiters, and hid not my face from shame and spitting* ‖. Yes, sinners; sinners of every kind; I bore the curse of the law, and died the death of the cross, on purpose that I might redeem such as you.—Most amiable REDEEMER! who would not listen to a call so wonderfully endearing? Sinners, how can you withstand a motive so sweetly constraining?

Hear his solemn *oath; As I live, saith the LORD GOD, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but that the wicked turn from his way and live. Turn ye, turn ye from your evil ways; for why will ye die, O house of Israel* §? Was there ever any declaration so charming? or any address so affectionate?—See! how the high and lofty ONE condescends! He commands in heaven, on earth, through hell; yet, more like a supplicant than a sovereign, he vouchsafes to solicit and

* Is. xliv. 22. † James i. 5. ‡ Is. l. 3.
‖ Ver. 6. § Ezek. xxxiii. 11.

and beſeech you. From the habitation of his glory he cries, *Turn ye*, poor periſhing creatures.—Again he cries, *Turn ye* to your GOD and SAVIOUR; that ye may be delivered from all your tranſgreſſions, and iniquity may not be your ruin.—To take away all your reluctance, he pleads, he expoſtulates, *Why will ye die?* why will ye deſtroy yourſelves, and be undone for ever?—That you may have no doubt of a free pardon and a favourable reception, *he ſwears;* ſwears by himſelf, by his own life and immortal perfections, that he *has no pleaſure in your death;* but ſhall rejoice, infinitely rejoice in your recovery and ſalvation.

Here then you have the *promiſe*, the *invitation*, the *oath* of the LORD. Can there be greater encouragement? will not this threefold cord draw you?—Should you ſay, "I cannot turn; I am tied and bound "with the chain of my corruptions. O! that CHRIST" —Fear not: he will, he will. He that ſends his miniſter to give you this exhortation; he that ſends his SPIRIT to work this deſire in your ſoul; he that ſpilt his blood to obtain all bleſſings for you; he will put forth his ſtrength, and turn you to himſelf. He ſtretched his beneficent hand, and ſaved Peter from ſinking in the tempeſtuous ſea. What he did for him is a pattern and a pledge of what he is ready to do for you.—Only continue to ſeek his face; let your heart talk of him; ſet his unbounded goodneſs and almighty power before your eyes; meditate on his infinite propitiation and incomprehenſible merits; conſider his everlaſting righteouſneſs and never-ceaſing interceſſion; look upon all theſe as your own. To look upon them as *your own*, you have a *warrant*, you have a *command*.—And if CHRIST has done ſo great things for you, you may aſſuredly believe, that, in his due time, in his wiſe manner, he will *bring you ſpiritual health and cure;* he will carry on what he has begun, and enable you to grow in grace. He will

comfort

comfort your hearts, and ſtabliſh you in every good work.

Shall I proceed ?—I have already been copious, perhaps ſomewhat tedious. Yet you will bear with me on this diſtinguiſhed and ſolemn occaſion: yes, you will bear with me a little longer: for I am loath, very loath to diſmiſs you, without perſuading you. Perſuading! alas, I cannot. *GOD, and none but GOD, can perſuade Japheth* *. However, as an inſtrument in his all-powerful hand, let me addreſs you once again:

I obſerve ſeveral perſons here, on this day of humiliation, who very rarely attend the public worſhip. —Why, my friends, why do you wrong your own ſouls? why do you withdraw yourſelves from the preaching of the goſpel? Know ye not, that *JESUS paſſeth by* †, in the way of his ordinances? Here you may, like Bartimeus of old, approach the Son of David; here you may obtain faith and holineſs. Faith cometh by hearing, and holineſs by the word of GOD. And are not theſe bleſſings worth your attendance? can you live happily without them? can you die comfortably without them? or can you, without them, be prepared to meet your GOD, when he cometh to judge the world?—Why ſhould you forſake the aſſembling yourſelves together? Do you hear terrifying or diſtreſſing doctrines in this place? is not this the houſe of praiſe, as well as of prayer? does not the *joyful ſound* echo under theſe roofs? Is not *CHRIST* ſet forth crucified before your eyes? crucified for ſuch offenders as you! crucified that ſuch offenders as you may be pardoned, may be accepted, may be glorified? And will you deſpiſe ſuch a divinely-compaſſionate SAVIOUR? will you refuſe ſuch aſtoniſhingly-rich mercies? O! that hereafter you may *be glad when they ſay unto you, Let us go into the courts of the LORD* ‡.

Should

* Gen. ix. 27. † Matth. xx. 30. ‡ Pſ. cxxii 1.

Should my wiſhes prove vain, I have at leaſt delivered my meſſage. If you periſh through obſtinacy and unbelief, I am clear from your blood. I call heaven and earth to witneſs, you have been *warned*, you have been *inſtructed*, you have been *exhorted*. You cannot ſay, you periſh for lake of knowledge; for life and ſalvation have been ſet before you, have been brought to your very door, and you are importuned to lay hold of them. You will therefore be without excuſe, and have no cloke for your guilt.

But why ſhould I leave you with ſuch melancholy apprehenſions? Let me hope better things of you; let me hope that you will not diſregard *theſe* admonitions, however you may have diſregarded *too many* exhortations of this kind. This is a remarkable day: O! that it may be memorable on account of your turning to GOD. Let this be its diſtinction through all your future life; let this be its diſtinction through all the ages of eternity: that you may ſay,—when death ſummons you into the inviſible ſtate; when the trump of GOD calls you to the great tribunal; when you mingle with ſaints and angels in the kingdom of heaven,—"Bleſſed be GOD for that ſolemn day, "and its ſacred exerciſes! That was the day of my "better birth. Then I began to conſider; then I "began to pray; then I began to ſee my undone "condition, and my extreme need of a SAVIOUR: "then too I ſaw *JESUS*, giving himſelf a ſacrifice "for my ſins, and redeeming me to GOD with his "blood."—Happy! thrice happy! inexpreſſibly-happy day! if *thus*, if *thus* improved!

You have, I preſume, abſtained from your uſual food, as you have been joining in confeſſion, ſupplication, and prayer. This is well done: but this is only half; rather it is, by infinite degrees, the ſmalleſt part of your duty. It is not ſaid, When the wicked man abſtaineth from his uſual food; but *when he turneth from his wickedneſs*, as the conſequence of his believing

lieving in *CHRIST*. It is not said, When the wicked man joins in public confession to GOD; but when *he doth that which is lawful and right*, as a fruit of his fellowship with *CHRIST*: THEN he shall *save*—he shall save *his soul*—he shall save his soul *alive*. O that all, from the king on the throne, to the labourer in the barn; from the highest nobleman, to the meanest tradesman; that all might now be inclined, now be enabled, to turn unto the SAVIOUR of the world. In him, millions, unnumbered millions of wretched sinners, have found recovery and liberty; *recovery* from the death, and *liberty* from the bondage of sin. *And* (blessed be his unbounded grace) *yet there is room*.

Then the national fast would be a *national blessing*. Whereas, without this all-important turning to the adorable SAVIOUR, what will the formalities of our devotion signify? They will be a mere lip-labour, a religious trifling: nay, they will be a solemn mockery of the ALMIGHTY, and provoke his abhorrence.—Does not JEHOVAH himself speak to the same purpose? *Is it such a fast that I have chosen? a day for a man to afflict his soul? is it to bow down his head as a bulrush, and to spread sackloth and ashes under him* *? to discontinue your ordinary business, and refrain from a meal's meat? to make a little doleful lamentation, and put up a few petitions extorted by fear? *Will you call this a fast?* saith the high and holy One, with an air of sovereign contempt; *this an acceptable day to the LORD?* No verily: it is the most odious hypocrisy; like crying, Hail master, with the tongue, while treachery and enmity fill the heart: *unless* you turn to *CHRIST*, that you may be washed, that you may be justified, that you may be sanctified; that, having remission of sins through his blood, and peace of conscience through his grace, you may feel the bands of wickedness loosed, and may become the willing servants of righteousness.

What

* Is. lviii. 5.

What is the *grand* ſin of our nation? Ignorance and neglect of *CHRIST*.—What is the *cauſe* of all our other ſins? Ignorance and neglect of *CHRIST*.—Why are the *judgments* of the ALMIGHTY hanging over our heads? For ignorance and neglect of *CHRIST*. Never, therefore, ſhall we anſwer the end of our ſacred aſſembly, nor the deſign of GOD's alarming viſitations, till we begin to know *CHRIST*, to receive *CHRIST*, to make uſe of *CHRIST* by faith. When this is done, we may reaſonably hope,—that our prayers will go up with acceptance, and not return again, till a bleſſing be ſent;—that, as individuals, our *light ſhall break forth like the morning*, *and our health ſhall ſpring forth ſpeedily*;—that, as a community, *the favour of GOD ſhall go before us*, *and the glory of the LORD ſhall be our rereward* *.

Then may we look *around* on our moſt enraged enemies, and ſay with the Pſalmiſt, *Though an hoſt of men ſhould encamp againſt me*, *yet ſhall not my heart be afraid* †.—Then may we look *backward* to the late deſolating earthquake, and ſay with the believers of old, *GOD is our refuge and ſtrength; therefore will we not fear*, *tho' the earth be removed*, *and though the mountains be carried into the midſt of the ſea* ‡.—Then may we look *forward* to an incomparably more dreadful ſcene, even to the righteous JUDGE, and the great tribunal, and ſay with the triumphant apoſtle, *Who ſhall lay any thing to our charge? It is GOD that juſtifieth; who ſhall condemn us? It is CHRIST that died* ‖.

Let me intreat you therefore, brethren, for the ſake of your own immortal ſouls, and for the welfare of our endangered nation; let me charge you by all that is deſirable in time, and awful in eternity, not to neglect theſe counſels. Being ſo ſolemnly reproved, if you *harden your neck*, your deſtruction cometh ſuddenly

* Iſ. lviii. 8.
† Pſal. xxvii. 3.
‡ Pſal. xlvi. 1, 2.
‖ Rom. viii. 33, 34,

ly, and *that without remedy* *. Having these warnings from the divine word, and warnings from the divine providence, *if ye still do wickedly;* it is not man, it is not an angel, it is GOD HIMSELF who declares, *Ye shall be consumed*—even *ye*—your country—*and your king* †.

* Prov. xxix. 1. † 1 Sam. xii. 25.

SERMON IV.

The Croſs of CHRIST the Chriſtian's Glory.

Preached at the viſitation of the Rev. John Brown, D. D. Archdeacon of Northampton, held at All Saints church in Northampton, on the 10th of May 1753.

GAL. vi. 14.

GOD forbid that I ſhould glory, ſave in the croſs of our LORD JESUS CHRIST.

THE croſs of CHRIST was the favourite topic of St Paul's contemplation:—the croſs of CHRIST was the choſen ſubject of his ſermons, and the grand theme of his writings.—At all times, and in every capacity, he profeſſed, he avowed, he *gloried* in the croſs of CHRIST.—Nay, what is very remarkable, he gloried in *nothing* elſe;—and, what is ſtill more obſervable, he *abhorred* the thought of glorying in any thing elſe. He ſpeaks of ſuch a practice in the language of deteſtation and dread, accounting it a high degree both of folly and of wickedneſs: *GOD forbid that I ſhould glory, ſave in the croſs of our LORD JESUS CHRIST.*

It may therefore be an employ worthy of our preſent

ſent attention, to inquire into the *nature*, the *reaſonableneſs*, and the *wiſdom* of this reſolution. All which, I hope, will appear, if we conſider,

I. In what the apoſtle would *not* glory.
II. In what he *did* glory.
III. What *reaſon* he had to glory in the croſs of CHRIST.

Theſe points being briefly diſpatched, I ſhall beg leave to add a word of *application*, ſuggeſted by the tenor of the diſcourſe, and adapted to the circumſtances of my ſeveral hearers. And may that adorable JESUS, who has exchanged his croſs for an heavenly crown, accompany all with his *divine bleſſing!*

Let us then inquire,

I. In what the apoſtle did *not* glory.—Not in the *greatneſs* of his *learning*, as a ſcholar. He was brought up at the feet of Gamaliel; educated by the moſt famous tutor of the age. Nor was his genius, or his induſtry, inferior to the other advantages of his education. Yet all theſe advantages, with their correſpondent acquiſitions, he accounted no better than pompous ignorance, or refined folly.

Not in the *ſtrictneſs* of his *life*, as a Jew.—In this reſpect he profited above his equals; *was taught according to the perfect manner of the law of the fathers** ; *after the ſtricteſt ſect of their religion he lived a Phariſee*†: was zealous, exceedingly zealous, of the whole ceremonial law, and of all the traditional conſtitutions. Which accompliſhments muſt finiſh his character among his countrymen; muſt open his way to ſome of the firſt honours of the nation; and give him a name among thoſe worthies, who were reputed *the excellent of the earth*. But what others counted gain, this *he* counted loſs for CHRIST.

* Acts xxii. 3. † Acts xxvi. 5.

Not in the *eminency* of his *gifts*, nor in the *extent* of his *uſefulneſs*, as a Chriſtian miniſter.—He had been caught up into the third heaven; had heard the words of GOD, and ſeen the viſion of the ALMIGHTY; had wrought all manner of wonders, and ſigns, and mighty deeds.—What was ſtill more valuable, he had planted churches, and converted ſouls. His labours were gone out into all lands, and his words into the ends of the earth.—Yet all theſe acquirements, before the infinite GOD, were *defective;* all theſe performances, in point of juſtification, were *inſufficient*. Therefore, in *none* of thoſe he gloried.—Which reminds me of the ſecond inquiry;

II. In what the apoſtle *did* glory.—He gloried in a croſs. Strange! What ſo *ſcandalous* as a croſs? On a croſs rebellious ſlaves were executed. The croſs was *execrable* among men, and *accurſed* even by GOD *. Yet the apoſtle glories in the croſs.—Crucifixion not being uſed among us, the expreſſion does not ſound ſo *harſh*, neither is the idea ſo *horrid*. But to the ear of a Galatian, it conveyed much the ſame meaning, as if the apoſtle had gloried in a halter, gloried in the gallows, gloried in a gibbet †.

" Stupid

* Gal. iii. 13.

† Some perſons, I am informed, were diſguſted at theſe words, *halter, gallows, gibbet*; they are ſo horribly contemptible!—To whom I would reply, that the croſs, in point of ignominy and torment, included *all this* and *more*. Unleſs the Engliſh reader forms to himſelf ſome ſuch image, he will never be able to apprehend the ſcandalous nature and ſhocking circumſtances of his divine Maſter's death.

The words, I muſt confeſs, were *diverſified*, and the ſentiment was *reiterated*, on purpoſe to affect the mind with this aſtoniſhing truth. Neither can I prevail upon myſelf to expunge the expreſſions; unleſs I could ſubſtitute others of a more ignominious and execrable import. Only I would beg of the ſerious reader, to ſpend a moment in the following reflection

"Stupid creature," perhaps ſome may reply, "to "undervalue the moſt ſubſtantial endowments, and "glory in infamy itſelf!"—But ſtop a moment, and hear the apoſtle farther. He glories in the croſs of CHRIST; that illuſtrious perſon, who was *anointed* to be the all-inſtructing Prophet, the all-atoning Prieſt, and the all-conquering King of the church.—In the croſs of CHRIST JESUS; who, by the diſcharge of all thoſe important offices, ſhould *ſave* his people from the dominion of ſin, and from the damnation of hell.—In the croſs of CHRIST JESUS our LORD; and not ours only, but LORD of all: who doth according to his will, in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth *; *who hath on his veſture, and on his thigh, a name written*, KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS†.

And is it poſſible for any human heart to contemplate the croſs of ſo *divine* a being, and not to glory? Is it poſſible to ſay, *Angels, he rules over* you; *but he died, he died on a croſs for* me; and not exult in ſuch tranſporting beneficence?—This will be more evident, if we examine.

III. What *reaſon* the apoſtle had to glory in the croſs of CHRIST.—The croſs, though in itſelf an ignominious tree; yet being the croſs of CHRIST, is infinitely ennobled. It becomes the *tree* of *life;* it bears the divineſt fruit; its cluſters are all *ſpiritual* and *heavenly* bleſſings. Two or three of thoſe cluſters you will permit me to ſelect; and may the GOD of all mercy make them better than a feaſt to every humble ſoul.

One

tion:—"Is it ſo, that a *polite* and *delicate* ear can hardly en-"dure ſo much as the *ſound* of the words? How amazing then "was the condeſcenſion! how charming and adorable the "goodneſs of GOD's *illuſtrious Son*, to *bear* all that is ſigni-"fied by theſe intolerably-vile terms! bear it *willingly*, bear "it *chearfully*, for us men, and our ſalvation!"

* Dan. iv. 35. † Rev. xix. 16.

One bleſſing is the *pardon* of *ſin:* the pardon of *all* ſin, original and actual; ſin that is remembered, and ſin that is forgotten; ſin, however circumſtanced, or however aggravated. The pardon of all was purchaſed by the death of CHRIST;—completely purchaſed:—ſo that, againſt the true believer, ſin ſhall never riſe up in judgment; *ſhall not ſo much as be mentioned unto him* *; ſhall be done away, as though it had never been. For thus ſaith the ambaſſador of the Prince of peace, *Be it known unto you, men and brethren, that through this man is preached unto you the forgiveneſs of ſins; and by him all that believe are juſtified from all things* †."—Oh, my ſoul! my guilty ſoul! what are all the kingdoms of the world, and the glories of them, compared with this ineffable bleſſing! Yet this is but one among a multitude.

Another benefit, accruing from the croſs of CHRIST, is *reconciliation with GOD.—When we were enemies, we were reconciled to GOD by the death of his Son* ‡. Not pardoned only, but accepted; from a ſtate of *enmity*, reſtored to a ſtate of *favour;* even that *favour which is better than life* ‖.—A privilege of ſuch ſuperlative excellency, that it was celebrated in the hymns of angels. When the heavenly hoſt uttered a ſong, *this* was the ſubject of their harmonious joy; *Glory be to GOD in the higheſt; and on earth peace, good-will towards men* §. "By the birth of this wonderful "child, and the death he ſhall ſuſtain, peace is made "between heaven and earth: and not *peace* only, but "a divine *friendſhip* * commences. GOD regards "the

* Ezek. xviii. 22. † Acts xiii. 38, 39.
‡ Rom. v. 10. ‖ Pſal. lxiii. 3. § Luke ii. 14.

* There ſeems to be a beautiful *gradation* in this angelic hymn. *Good-will* is more expreſſive, and denotes a richer bleſſing, than *peace*.—The original Ευδοκια is a word of the moſt amiable and noble meaning. It ſignifies a very *high eſteem*, and a very *tender benevolence*. By a word of the ſame import, the almighty Father expreſſes his infinite ſatisfaction in the perſon

"the poor apoſtate race of men, not only without "indignation, but with complacency and delight. "*He rejoices over them to do them good* *."

Another benefit is *holineſs;* or, if you pleaſe, the true, the Chriſtian morality.—Let none think, the believer in JESUS diſparages *true morality*. True morality is the image of the bleſſed GOD; it is moſt charmingly delineated throughout the whole Bible; it is the beginning of heaven in the human ſoul; and its proper origin is from the croſs of our divine Maſter.—For, through the merits of his death, ſinners are made partakers of the *Holy Spirit;* who writes upon their hearts, and makes legible in their converſation, what was anciently written upon the mitre of the high prieſt, HOLINESS TO THE LORD.—And oh! what a *motive* is the croſs of CHRIST to the exerciſe of every virtue! *He died; my* LORD, *my* JUDGE, *my* KING, *died; to redeem me from all iniquity, and make me zealous of good works*. How powerfully, far beyond any *naked inſtructions*, or *abſtract reaſonings*, do ſuch conſiderations invite us,—urge us,—conſtrain us †, to *renounce* all ungodlineſs, and *adorn* the goſpel of GOD our SAVIOUR!

Another bleſſing is *victory over death*.—This alſo is the

perſon and undertaking of his beloved Son. Matth. iii. 17.

Would my reader have the livelieſt paraphraſe on this paſſage, or ſee the actings of this divine complacency deſcribed with inimitable delicacy; let him attend to the prophet Zephaniah; *The LORD thy GOD, in the midſt of thee, is mighty. He will ſave; he will rejoice over thee with joy; he will reſt in his love; he will joy over thee with ſinging*, ch. iii. 17.

* Deut. xxviii. 63. † 2 Cor. v. 14.

Religion! thou the ſoul of happineſs;
And, groaning Calvary, of thee! *There* ſhine
The nobleſt truths; *there* ſtrongeſt motives ſting!
There ſacred violence aſſaults the ſoul;
There nothing but *compulſion* is forborn.

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the fruit of that once deteſted, but now ever-beloved tree. For thus it is written, *That, through death, he might deſtroy him that had the power of death, that is the devil; and deliver them who, through fear of death, were all their life-time ſubject to bondage* *. The devil is ſaid to have the power of death; becauſe, by tempting too ſucceſsfully our firſt parents, he *brought* death into the world; becauſe, by tempting their poſterity to ſin, and too often prevailing, he *arrays* death in horror; he *arms* death with its ſting. But CHRIST, by expiating our guilt, has diſarmed this laſt enemy; has taken away its ſting; and made it not loſs, but *gain to die*†.—The *gay*, and the *healthy*, know not how to form an eſtimate of this deliverance: nor can any words of mine deſcribe it with proper energy. Go to *dying* beds; *there* you will learn its true worth. Aſk ſome *agonizing* friend; he, and he alone, can tell you, what a bleſſing it is, to have the king of terrors converted into a meſſenger of peace.

One bleſſing more I would mention, and earneſtly wiſh it, in due time, to all my hearers; *an entrance into heaven*. This too is the produce of our REDEEMER's croſs.—St John ſaw a bright aſſembly of happy beings, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands, rejoicing before the throne of GOD. *Theſe*, ſaid one of the venerable elders, *are they who came out of great tribulation, and have waſhed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the LAMB*. THEREFORE *are they before the throne*‡.—*They came out of great tribulation:* they ſuffered, it is probable, in the ſervice of CHRIST: perhaps they laid down their lives for his ſake. But *this* was not their paſſport into the regions of bliſs.—*They waſhed their robes in the blood of the LAMB*‡ they had applied to their own ſouls the merits and atonement of the crucified JESUS. By *this* means they were preſented without ſpot and blameleſs;

* Heb. ii. 14, 15.

† Philip. i. 21. ‡ Rev. vii. 9, 14, 15.

blameleſs; on *this* account they were admitted to "ſee the King of heaven in his beauty *;" and to be ever, ever with the LORD.

Since then the croſs of CHRIST was *demonſtrative* of ſuch ſtupendous *love*; ſince it is *productive* of *benefits* innumerable, invaluable, and eternal; was there not a *cauſe* for the apoſtle to glory on this behalf?—Nay, might not the very ſtones have cried out, to reproach him with *inſenſibility* and *ingratitude*, if he had neglected to glory in the croſs of CHRIST?—And ſince this love was ſhewed, theſe benefits were procured, not for *him* only, but for *us*, and for all generations; does not this afford me an opportunity of applying the doctrine to each particular hearer?

1. Let me addreſs, or rather let me congratulate, my *brethren in the miniſtry*.—Though you cannot controul the laws of nature; though you cannot ſee into the ſecrets of futurity; you have the ſame cauſe of glorying with the very chiefeſt of the apoſtles; a cauſe of glorying, which that holy man of GOD eſteemed far above all ſuch miraculous abilities. You have the croſs of CHRIST,

For your *ſtudy*, as *men*;
For your *hope* as *Chriſtians*;
For your *preaching*, as *miniſters*.

For your *ſtudy*, as *men*. Here the *reaſoning* faculties may exert themſelves with everlaſting improvement, and everlaſting delight.—Here we contemplate the wonders, the unparelleled wonders of a GOD made *man*; dying as a pattern of patience, as a martyr for truth, as an all-perfect ſacrifice for ſin.—Here the LORD JEHOVAH hath fully granted, what his ſervant Moſes † ſo earneſtly requeſted; he hath made

* Iſ. xxxiii. 17. † Exod. xxxiii. 18.

made *all his glory* to pass before the astonished eyes of angels and of men.—Here *Justice* has let her most awful terrors in array; even while *goodness* appears, with inexpressible loveliness, and the most attractive beauty. —Here *Truth*, more unshaken than a rock, takes her immovable stand; and *Mercy*, tenderer than the mother's tear, yearns with bowels of everlasting pity — In a word, the cross of CHRIST is a conspicuous theatre, on which *all* the divine perfections unite, and harmonize, and shine forth with transcendent lustre.

As *Christians*, we have, in the cross of CHRIST, the *richest provision* for our own spiritual wants.—This is a foundation of the sublimest *hope*, and a fountain of the most exuberant *joy*: this affords matter for the deepest *humility*, and yields fuel for the most flaming *love*. Faith in our crucified JESUS is an ever-active principle of the most chearful and exact *obedience*; is an ample and inexhaustible magazine, from which we may fetch arms to conquer, absolutely conquer the allurements of the world, the solicitations of the flesh, and the temptations of the devil.—By this a way is opened for us into *the holy of holies*; and what may we not venture to ask, what may we not expect to receive, who have the blood of the everlasting covenant to plead, in all our approaches to the throne of grace;—Having therefore *such* an high priest; having in his cross, *unsearchable* riches; who shall make our glorying void? what shall hinder us from rejoicing and saying? "Blessed be GOD for "these opening beauties of spring! blessed be GOD "for the expected fruits of autumn! blessed be GOD "for ten thousand thousand gifts of his indulgent "providence! but *above all*, blessed be GOD for the "cross of CHRIST!"

As *ministers* of the gospel, we are not left to set before our hearers a system of *refined Heathenism*; or to entertain them with *cold spiritless* lectures of virtue. No;

No; we have the *infinitely tender* love, the *immenſely-free* grace, of the bleeding, dying IMMANUEL, to diſplay—to improve—to enforce. And is there a topic in the whole compaſs of *oratory*, is there an argument amidſt all the ſtores of *reaſon*, ſo admirably calculated to touch the *fineſt movements* of the ſoul? to ſtrike all the *inmoſt ſprings* of action, with the moſt perſuaſive, the moſt commanding energy;—Would we alarm the *ſupine*, or intimidate the *preſumptuous?* we may call them to behold GOD's own Son weltering in blood, GOD's own Son transfixed with the arrows of juſtice: we may bid them conſider, if judgment begins with the immaculate MEDIATOR, where ſhall the irreclaimable ſinner appear? how will he *eſcape* the ſtroke? how *bear* the weight of GOD's everlaſting vengeance?—Would we comfort the *diſtreſſed?* we may point them to an atonement, whoſe merits are infinite, and able to ſave to the *very uttermoſt* *: we may lead them to a righteouſneſs, whoſe efficacy is unbounded, and ſufficient to juſtify *the ungodly*. And what *balm* can be ſo ſovereign for a wounded conſcience?—Are we to ſupport the *weak*, and animate the *doubting?* here we may ſhew them promiſes, free promiſes †, exceeding great and precious promiſes, ratified by the oath of JEHOVAH, and ſealed by the blood of his Son. And what *cordials* can be ſo reſtorative to the drooping Chriſtian;

In ſhort, the doctrine of the croſs is ſuited to anſwer all the *great ends* of our miniſtry, and promote all the truly *valuable intereſts* of our people. By this the HOLY SPIRIT delights to work: and this, O *Satan*, *ſhall be thy plague*; this, O ſin, *ſhall be thy deſtruction*.

* Heb. vii. 25.

† To man the bleeding croſs has promis'd all:
The bleeding croſs has ſworn eternal grace:
Who gave his life, what grace will he deny?
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ſtruction *.—However, therefore, the croſs might be to the Jews a ſtumbling block, and to the Greeks fooliſhneſs; GOD forbid that *we* ſhould glory in any thing elſe!—Let this be the *Alpha* and *Omega*, the beginning and ending †, of all our *public* miniſtrations. —Let us leave a ſavour of this knowledge, which is far better than precious ointment, in every *private* company!—Let it appear, from all our converſation, that the *affections* of our heart, and the *labours* of our life, are devoted, wholly devoted to our adored REDEEMER's croſs.—*Happy* the *people* who are under the care of ſuch miniſters! and *bleſſed* the *miniſters* who walk according to this rule!

2. Let me exhort all *true believers*; thoſe who are *vile* in their own eyes, and to whom CHRIST alone is *precious*.—Remember, brethren, what is written in the prophet: it is a deſcription of your ſtate; it is a direction for your conduct. *In the LORD*, the LORD JESUS CHRIST, *ſhall all the ſeed of Iſrael be juſtified, and in him ſhall they glory* ‡.

Let none ſay that religion is a *gloomy* or *uncomfortable* ſtate; I call upon you this day to *rejoice* ‖. Let none ſay

* Hoſ. xiii. 14.

† The author who could write the *ſpirited* and *weighty* lines which follow, muſt doubtleſs have had this conviction *deep* on his heart.

——Thou, my *all!*
My theme! my inſpiration! and my crown!
My ſtrength in age! my riſe in low eſtate!
My ſoul's ambition, pleaſure, wealth!—my world!
My light in darkneſs! and my life in death!
My boaſt through time! bliſs through eternity!
My *ſacrifice!* my *GOD!*—What things are theſe!
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‡ Iſ. xlv. 25.

‖ 'Tis this makes *Chriſtian triumph* a command!
'Tis this makes joy a *duty* to the wiſe
Night Thoughts, No IV.

say that religion is a *mean* or *despicable* thing; I call upon you this day to *glory;* and have the *divine* authority for both *.—You will dishonour the blessed JESUS, you will disparage his surpassing excellency, if you do not *confide* in him, and make your *boast* of him. CHRIST is King of heaven, CHRIST is Judge of the world, CHRIST is GOD over all. And of *such* a SAVIOUR shall we not glory? Yes, verily; and in all circumstances, and on every occasion.

Amidst your manifold *infirmities*, glory in CHRIST. For, though he was crucified in weakness, he hath all power in heaven and earth. And it is written before him, it is one of his immutable decrees, *sin shall not have dominion over you* †.—Amidst your various *failings*, glory in CHRIST. For his righteousness covers all your imperfections, his righteousness secures you from wrath and condemnation; and, though deficient in yourselves, you are complete in him ‡.—Under the pressure of *tribulations*, lift up your heads, and glory in the cross; because the Captain of your salvation was made perfect through sufferings. If you suffer with him, you shall also reign with him. And the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the happiness which CHRIST hath purchased with his agonies, and will quickly bestow on his people.—When *death* approaches, death, that cuts off the spirit of princes, and is terrible among the kings of the earth; do you still glory in the cross. Adhering to this banner, you may boldly and triumphantly say, *O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory* ‖?—When that great, *tremendous day*

* Καυχαομαι, the word in our text, denotes the act of *rejoicing*, as well as of *glorying*. Thus it is translated, Rom. v. 11. And indeed this it always implies.—See Psal. v. 11. Psal. cxlix. 5. *Sept. transl.*

† Rom. vi. 14. ‡ Col. ii. 10.

‖ 1 Cor. xv. 55. This is evidently the language of a *conqueror*,

day shall come, which puts an end to time and terrestrial things; when that awful, that *majestic voice* is heard, which commands all the race of Adam to appear at the bar; *then*, my dear brethren in *CHRIST*, *then* also shall *you* glory in the cross. When others, in an agony of terror, call upon rocks to fall on them, and mountains to overwhelm them; *this* shall be *your* sedate appeal; rather, *this* shall be *your* heroic challenge; *Who shall lay any thing to the charge of GOD's elect? It is GOD that justifieth; who is he that condemneth? It is CHRIST that died* *.—Then shall you enter the harbour of eternal rest; not like a shipwrecked mariner cleaving to some broken plank, and hardly escaping the raging waves; but like some stately vessel, with all her sails expanded, and riding before a prosperous gale †.

3. Let me caution the *self-righteous*: those who more frequently think of *their own* piety than of *CHRIST's obedience;* are more apt to cry out with the Pharisee, *I am no extortioner, no adulterer;* than to confess with the publican, *GOD, be merciful to me a sinner.*

queror, addressed to some *formidable*, but *vanquished* enemy.—We shall form no improper idea of this significant and beautiful passage, if we picture to ourselves the good apostle, in the attitude of those Hebrew captains, who set their feet on the necks of the five Canaanitish kings, Josh x. 24. If we suppose him, in such a posture, to utter this animated exclamation, or rather this *pious insult*, over the two grand, but prostrate adversaries of mankind; "*O death, where is now thy sting*, "since *CHRIST* has expiated sin, by the sacrifice of him-"self? *O grave, where is now thy victory*, since *CHRIST* "is both risen himself, and has ascertained to his people a joy-"ful resurrection?" * Rom. viii. 33, 34.

† St Peter's expression Εισοδος πλουσιως επιχορηγηθησεται, is perhaps too nervous, and too noble to admit of an *adequate* translation. The above comparison is, I think, a very pertinent illustration of the delicate sentiment, and the delightful doctrine. A ship wafted into the port, under the full influence of wind and tide, seems to afford the finest representation of a *large*, a *rich*, an *abundant* entrance. 2 Pet. i. 11.

ſinner.—What ſhall I ſay to theſe perſons? Let me not be thought *cenſorious*, when my only aim is to be *faithful*. Beware, I beſeech you, beware, leſt you build for eternity, not on a *rock*; but on the *ſand*. However you may appear in *your own* ſight, before the *adorable* majeſty of the everlaſting GOD, before the *conſummate* perfection of his holy law, you are leſs than nothing, you are worſe than nothing: you are, indeed you are, deficiency and ſin. Renounce, therefore, renounce all dependence on ſelf. Truſt no longer in a refuge of lies; leaſt all your admired attainments, at the day of final retribution, be like *ſtraw*, and *hay*, and *ſtubble*, in Nebuchadnezzar's burning fiery furnace.—Imitate the bleſſed penman of my text. Are you blameleſs in your external carriage? ſo was he. Are you exemplary in many points? ſo was he. Yet all this righteouſneſs he *accounted but dung for the excellency of the knowledge of CHRIST JESUS his LORD* *.—Be this your pattern. Write *emptineſs* upon your own duties, *emptineſs* upon your own works; and you ſhall be filled with all the *fulneſs* of GOD your SAVIOUR. Every other cauſe of glorying will be like the morning cloud, or the early dew, which *paſſeth away* †: but this cauſe of glorying will *ſtand faſt for evermore as the moon*, and *as the faithful witneſs in heaven* ‡.

Can I conclude, without adding a word of admonition to the *wicked?* thoſe, I mean, who are enemies to the croſs of CHRIST; who mind earthly things, but neither hunger nor thirſt after righteouſneſs.—My ſoul remembers the wormwood and the gall of ſuch a ſtate, and cannot but tenderly pity theſe unhappy people.—Alas! my friends, what have *you* to glory in? The devil and his angels expect ere long to glory in your deſtruction. Thoſe malignant fiends are eying you as their prey, and are impatient

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* Phil. iii. 8. † Hoſ. vi. 4. ‡ Pſ. lxxxix. 37.

to begin your torment. Great, inexpreſſibly great is your danger: the LORD almighty open your eyes to diſcern it.—Nevertheleſs, your caſe is not deſperate. You may *yet* be *delivered*, "as a bird out of the ſnare "of the fowler." Look unto the crucified JESUS. *Why* does he hang on that bloody tree? *why* are his hands pierced with iron? *why* is his body racked with pain? *why* his heart torn with anguiſh? It is for *you*, ſinners, for *you*. That blood is poured out, to cleanſe *you* from guilt; thoſe wounds are ſuſtained, to heal *your* conſciences; that anguiſh is endured, to obtain reſt for *your* ſouls.—In that mangled body *dwells all the fulneſs of the Godhead* *. Great, beyond imagination great, is the merit of thoſe ſufferings. Why then, O! why will you die? why will you periſh for ever, who have an *all-ſufficient* propitiation in the croſs of CHRIST? Fly to this ſanctuary: fly before it be too late: fly, without a moment's delay. 'Tis an *inviolable* ſanctuary. None ever periſhed that fled by faith to the compaſſionate, the *divinely compaſſionate* REDEEMER.—His death ſhall be a full ſatisfaction for your iniquities. A ſenſe of his immenſely rich goodneſs ſhall *win* your affections; ſhall incline (what all the threatenings of damnation could never effect,) ſhall incline you to *loath* your ſins, and to *love* his ſervice; ſhall ſmooth your path, and expedite your progreſs, to the regions of immortal honour and joy.

Having now, with great plainneſs of ſpeech, addreſſed my *brethren* in the *miniſtry*; having exhorted *believers*, cautioned the *ſelf-righteous*, and warned the *wicked*; let me commend the whole to your *ſerious recollection*, and to GOD's *gracious benediction*.—And, "O LORD moſt holy! O GOD moſt mighty! O "holy and merciful SAVIOUR! by thine agony and "bloody ſweat—by thy *croſs* and *paſſion*"—let not the word now ſpoken be in vain in the LORD! *Amen* and *amen*.

SER-

* Col. ii. 9.

SERMON V.

The Miniſtry of Reconciliation: repreſenting the benign tendency of the goſpel; and that it is the friendly office of miniſters, as the ambaſſadors of Chriſt, to preſs men, with all imaginable tenderneſs, humility, and earneſtneſs, to accept the treaty of reconciliation, as eſtabliſhed in him, and urged by him, while on earth.

We are ambaſſadors for Chriſt, as though God did beſeech you *by* us: *We pray you, in Chriſt's ſtead, be ye reconciled unto God.* 2 Cor. v. 20.

ADVERTISEMENT.

AS this is a poſthumous piece, it may be neceſſary to obſerve, for the ſatisfaction of the public, that Mr Hervey was, many years ago, ſolicited to print this ſermon, by ſeveral who heard it; but as he was a man of great modeſty, and had not *then* appeared as an author, he could not at *that* time be prevailed on, by any ſolicitations, to comply with their requeſt.—However, at a particular friend's deſire, he tranſcribed it from his ſhort-hand copy, and gave it to him.—Some years afterwards, this friend deſired Mr Hervey to reviſe it, with a view of its being publiſhed; which (in conjunction with a very eminent divine) he accordingly did; and then returned the copy to his friend; telling him, that as the *Meditations on the tombs*, &c. had been ſo well received, he had *now* no objection againſt publiſhing it, with ſome other ſermons; and that he might one day or another require it of

him again for that purpose.—This sermon is printed from that very copy; and Mr Hervey himself would probably have added it to the volume which contains his four sermons, had he happened to recollect that it was in the possession of a friend who would willingly have relinquished it to its author for publication.

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2 COR. v. 18.

All things are of GOD, who hath reconciled us to himself by JESUS CHRIST, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation.

THE love of God, that supremely-glorious, and supremely-gracious Being, is, of all other tempers, the most delightful and divine; a sacred flower, which, in its early bud, is happiness, and, in its full bloom, is heaven.—To plant this noble principle in the breast, to cultivate its growth, and bring it to maturity, is the grand end of all religion, and the genuine fruit of faith unfeigned.—Angels are happy, because the love of GOD triumphs eternally, and without a rival in their exalted affections *. True believers are happy, because the love of GOD, in a prevailing degree, is shed abroad in their hearts. The gospel is a dispensation of happiness, because it discovers the superabundant loving-kindness of GOD to man, and urges the most engaging motives for our ardent love to his almighty Majesty.

The gospel represents the great GOD, not only as bestowing

* To be *good* is to be happy:—Angels are happier than men, because they are better.

Guilt is the source of sorrow; 'tis the fiend,
Th' *avenging* fiend, who follows us behind
With whips and stings; the *bless'd* know none of *this*,
But rest in everlasting peace of mind. ROWE.

beſtowing upon his creatures all the good they enjoy, but as effecting their reconciliation to his own adorable ſelf; effecting this moſt deſirable of all bleſſings, not barely by vouchſafing a pardon, but a pardon procured by the death of his Son; and, by this enriching circumſtance, infinitely enhanced; arrayed in all the charms that heaven itſelf could give.—To render the purpoſes of his love more effectual and extenſive, he has inſtituted an order of men to publiſh theſe glad tidings; and to invite, yea to beſeech the world, to partake the exceeding riches of his grace.—All which the apoſtle has expreſſed in my text, with his uſual energy and conciſeneſs; *All things are of GOD, who hath reconciled us to himſelf by JESUS CHRIST, and hath given to us the miniſtry of reconciliation.*

From which words, permit me, with all that ſimplicity which becomes a miniſter of the humble JESUS,

I. To enlarge a little upon that glorious and amiable repreſentation of the bleſſed GOD, diſcoverable even by the light of nature, *All things are of him.*

II. To remind you, how much more illuſtriouſly the delightful attributes of the DEITY are diſplayed in the accompliſhment of our redemption; in that *he hath reconciled us to himſelf by JESUS CHRIST.*

III. To obſerve the benign import and beneficial tendency of the goſpel-miniſtry, expreſſed in that remarkable clauſe, *He hath given to us the miniſtry of reconciliation.*

Firſt, Then let me enlarge a little upon that glorious and amiable repreſentation of the bleſſed GOD, diſcoverable even by the light of nature, *All things are of him.*—Heaven, and the heaven of heavens are his, with all their hoſts. Thrones and dominions, principalities and powers, all the happy beings, that ſit at the fountain-head of felicity, were produced by his power, and are ſupplied with bleſſings from his hand, are filled with joy from his countenance.—If

we trace the various emanations of comfort and advantage that refreſh our lower world, we ſhall find reaſon to acknowledge with the Pſalmiſt, "All our "freſh ſprings are in GOD." The day is thine, ſays the ſame ſacred writer, and the night is thine; thou haſt prepared the light and the ſun. The magnificent luminaries in the ſky, are lamps of the LORD; hung up on high, to diſpenſe the chearing gift of light amidſt all the families of nature. The interchanges of night and day, with the viciſſitudes of revolving ſeaſons, are his miniſters; all ſent on errands of kindneſs, and bringing the moſt valuable preſents in their hands. The innumerable variety of living creatures, and of nutrimental vegetables, are the portion, not which our own induſtry has procured, but which our heavenly Father's bounty has ſettled upon us.

Every great endowment, beſtowed on the children of men; every noble atchievement, accompliſhed by renowned perſonages; theſe derive their original from the uncreated Fountain of perfection and of power.

If Solomon is poſſeſſed of enlarged wiſdom, and kingly qualities; he expreſsly acknowledges, it is from the LORD, ſuperintending human affairs, that ſuch kings are advanced to reign; and by the LORD enlightening their minds, that ſuch princes decree juſtice. If, at one period, Nebuchadnezzar purſues his conqueſts with irreſiſtible impetuoſity, it is to ſcourge the offending people of the LORD; and baniſh idolatry from their worſhip as the driving wind ſwept the chaff from their floors. If, at another juncture, Cyrus is equally victorious, and "comes upon prin-"ces as upon mortar, and as the potter treadeth "clay;" it was the LORD of hoſts that raiſed up this accompliſhed commander from the Eaſt, and bid him execute his deſigns of reſtoring love to his reformed nation.—All thoſe arts which meliorate, and ſciences which embelliſh life, even theſe are from the LORD,

LORD, "who is wonderful in counsel, and excel-"lent in working."

The time would fail me to enumerate particulars. —Whatever is beneficial to communities, or comfortable to individuals; whatever springs from the rain of heaven, or is produced by fruitful seasons; whatever administers to the improvement, or chears the heart of man; all, all acknowledge GOD for their Author. He is the Giver of every good and perfect gift. The whole earth is filled with the profusion of his beneficence. And where, where is the creature, that has not tasted, that does not subsist on, the inexhaustible stores of his bounty?—And though affliction also comes from the Father of our spirits, yet this is no derogation from his tender mercies: since he chastens, not with an arbitrary severity, but with a parental pity; he chastens, only to amend; and these light, these transient tribulations, are preparatives for an exceeding great and eternal weight of glory.

And is not such a being worthy of our highest admiration, and our devotest love? Has he not, by such ineffable excellencies, such unmeasurable benignity,—has he not an undoubted claim to the affections of our hearts, the praises of our tongues, and the unintermitted services of our lives? He is the source of all our good; should he not also be the centre of all our gratitude, and of our whole obedience?—But our obligations will rise immensely higher, if we consider,

Secondly, how much more illustriously the delightful attributes of the DEITY are displayed in the accomplishment of our redemption; in that *he hath reconciled us to himself by JESUS CHRIST*.—Man was created upright, immaculate, and in the image of GOD. Heavenly wisdom shone bright in his understanding, and true holiness sat enthroned in his heart. —But how soon, how fatally, did he fall! from what height of perfection, to what depth of degeneracy? Since that destructive transgression, all flesh has corrupted

rupted his way; every man is become brutiſh in his knowledge; and the imagination of the thoughts of his heart is only evil continually. "Our iniquities "ſeparated between us and our GOD, and our ſins "hid his face from us," as from an abominable object. Nay, our ſins accuſed us at his righteous tribunal, and like the blood of Abel, cried to heaven for vengeance. Vengeance and fiery indignation was our expected doom, and eternal death the wages due to our offences.—What rendered the miſery of mankind ſtill more exceſſively deplorable, and only not deſperate, was, that they *were without ſtrength;* without any power to make ſatisfaction for their provocations, or extricate themſelves from this abyſs of wo.—O wretched, wretched man, if left in this ſtate of guilt and ruin! If abandoned by the GOD, from whom thou haſt ungratefully revolted, better had it been for thee never to have exiſted.

But behold the kindneſs and love of GOD our Saviour! Hearken to the ſounding of his bowels and of his mercies towards us! "I have ſeen," ſaid he, (as in the caſe of enſlaved Iſrael,) "I have ſeen the af-"fliction of my fallen creatures. They have undone "themſelves, but in me * is their recovery. Satan "has deceived, and deceiving has deſtroyed them; "but I, even I will deliver them."—Wherewithal will the LORD accompliſh this deſign? By his free, unmerited goodneſs. By the blood of bulls, or of goats, or of all the cattle upon a thouſand hills? Contemptible to the laſt degree are ſuch beggarly oblations; only ſo far as they typify the all-glorious ſacrifice.—Was an angel charged with this important buſineſs, or the higheſt ſeraph bidden to interpoſe as the repairer of our breach? The angels were abſolutely incapable of executing ſo great a work. It required a far abler agent, to negotiate our reconciliation. It

* See Hoſ. xiii. 9.

It must cost incomparably more to redeem guilty souls. Therefore the GOD of our salvation "laid the help "upon one that is mighty." He appointed, to the most momentous of all offices, the most illustrious of all beings. He appointed his own Son, the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person.

Behold then the Son of G O D, taking our nature, that he may act as our Mediator. Admirable constitution! full of wonder and full of grace!—How joyful to the sinner! the work must infallibly prosper in such hands. Such a Surety cannot fail of succeeding, in all he undertakes.—How gracious in the Father! Could there be a stronger assurance, or a more emphatical demonstration of his boundless beneficence, than to send the Son of his bosom; the Son of his eternal delight; the Son dearer to him than all worlds?—How condescending in the Saviour! Would Ahasuerus abdicate his imperial diadem, or the great ruler of Babylon forego the honours of his enlarged dominions, to attend on the welfare of some ignoble captive that grinds at a mill, or of some infamous malefactor that is chained in a dungeon? Yet the everlasting Potentate of heaven and universal nature, undertakes a more humbling office of friendship, for a race of abject creatures, that dwell in dust, and were doomed to hell.—Let every child of Adam look unto *CHRIST* by faith, as all the people of Israel looked unto Moses, when he went into the tabernacle of the congregation to intercede before the LORD. (See Exodus xxxiii. 8.)

We have seen the *person* reconciling, let us next contemplate the *manner* of reconciling. A subject equally astonishing and delightful! The Father reconciled us to himself, by laying upon his Son the iniquities of us all; by admitting him to stand in our stead, and by exacting from him, the punishment which we had incurred.—G O D reconciled us to himself, not only by the humiliation, but by the suffering of this

Prince

Prince of heaven; and not by ſome ſlighter ſuffering, but by his ſuffering unto death; and not by his undergoing a common death, but the moſt ignominious and tormenting of all deaths, the death of the croſs. "It pleaſed the Father," ſays the apoſtle, "to reconcile all things to himſelf; making peace by the blood "of the croſs."—Becauſe we deſerved ſhame, the LORD of glory was numbered with malefactors, and loaded with infamy. Becauſe we deſerved the bitterneſs of death, the LORD of life endured the pangs of diſſolution, in their unabated and moſt racking extremities. Becauſe we were obnoxious to the curſe of the law, therefore the ever-bleſſed "JESUS deliver-"ed us from the curſe of the law, being made a curſe "for us."

Glorious propitiation! and altogether as complete as glorious! What now ſhall terrify the true believer? What ſhall ſtand between him, and his eternal hopes?

Shall Satan muſter up his accuſations, and ſet them in frightful array? Yet, though there may be much guilt, there is no condemnation to them that are in *JESUS CHRIST*.—Does the law take the guilty mortal by the throat, and, with its rigorous ſeverity, ſay, "Pay me that thou oweſt?" It is paid, fully paid by the intervention and ſuretiſhip, not of a mean man, but of the mighty GOD made fleſh.—Does divine Juſtice demand ſatisfaction, for the wrongs received from ſinners? It is not only ſatisfied, but moſt awfully glorified, by this wonderful oblation.—In ſhort, this is a full, perfect, and ſufficient ſacrifice for the ſins of the whole world. It vindicates the honour of GOD's holineſs; it diſplays his unſearchable wiſdom; it manifeſts his utterable goodneſs; it gives the moſt magnificent and lovely luſtre to all the divine perfections.—May we not then, looking unto our bleeding Saviour, and pleading his ineſtimable propitiation, venture to adopt the apoſtle's challenge? "Who ſhall lay any thing to the charge of GOD's

"elect?

"elect? it is GOD that justifieth;" not imputing our trespasses unto us, but transferring them to his dear Son. "Who is he that condemneth? it is "*CHRIST* that died," and by his precious death hath made reconciliation for iniquity, and brought in everlasting righteousness.

I have been the more copious upon this subject, because it is not only the grand point in my text, but is the very heart of the gospel; the fountain of all our comforts, and the foundation of all our hopes.—But I proceed, and with greater brevity,

Thirdly, To observe the benign import and beneficial tendency of the gospel-ministry, expressed in that remarkable clause, *He hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation*. Here I am not attempting to magnify my office, or to aggrandize the ministerial character; but only to render our services *acceptable* to our brethren.—Some persons, whether through prejudice or mistake, are apprehensive of being terrified by our message, or "tormented before the time" by our doctrine. But can the news of reconciliation to the LORD GOD of hosts terrify, or the offer of remission of sins torment? How welcome should be the approach, or, to speak in the elegant language of a prophet, "how beautiful the feet of him that bring-"eth good tidings!" And can there be better tidings, more reviving, or more transporting, than those of the everlasting gospel? which saith unto *Zion*, "Thy "iniquity is taken away, and thy sin purged:" thy GOD is reconciled, and instead of abhorring thee as a rebel, is willing to embrace thee as a child.—When our armies have been in the field, and some very important, some decisive engagement drawing near; with what eagerness have you expected, and with what delight have you received, the account of complete victory gained? And is not our report equally worthy of all acceptation, which declares Satan vanquished, and sin destroyed; declares death abolished,

hell deprived of its prey, and all the rich advantages of peace with heaven reſtored?—When Peter lay bound in priſon, was the angel an unwelcome miniſter, who ſtruck away his fetters, opened the gates of iron, and tranſmitted him, free and unmoleſted, to the cordial ſalutations of his friends? As you are all, by nature, in bondage to ſin, our buſineſs is, to take you by the hand, and lead you out of this ignominious ſlavery, into the glorious liberty of the ſons of GOD; while the Spirit of the Moſt High breaks off your ſhackles, and makes you free indeed.—What manna can be more refreſhing than ſuch a meſſage? what balm more healing than ſuch a ſervice?—If, at any time, we arm our words with terror, and denounce the vengeance of GOD on every ſoul of man that doth evil; this is only to awaken you from that gay inſenſibility, which would lull you into irretrievable ruin. It is like the gathering clouds, and the diſtant burſts of thunder, which might warn Noah to retire into the ark, before that infinitely more tremendous deluge came, which was to ſweep the careleſs world away.—Whether therefore we diſplay the allurements of divine love, it is for your delight; or whether we bend the bow of divine indignation, it is for your benefit; to win you to happineſs, or drive you from miſery. So that in every reſpect, and by all our miniſtrations, we are to be "helpers of your "faith, and furtherers of your joy."

And let not any one ſuſpect, that a meſſage of ſuch free and rich grace has a tendency to ſoothe men into ſupineneſs, or ſerve the cauſe of licentiouſneſs. It is, of all other expedients, moſt effectually calculated to reconcile us to GOD, in another ſenſe of the word; to ſubdue our enmity, and captivate our perverſe affections; to impreſs our alienated hearts with adoring gratitude, and engage our refractory wills to dutiful obedience.—For can we be cold and indifferent to ſuch immenſe benignity? can we affront and grieve ſuch unſpeakably-

unſpeakably-tender kindneſs? What effect had David's clemency in ſparing Saul's life, when it was in the power of his hand to have diſpatched that implacable enemy? It overcame, for a while, even malice itſelf; it fetched tears of ſorrow from the perſecutor's eyes, and expreſſions of the moſt endeared affections from his lips *. And when GOD, the GOD to whom vengeance belongeth, not only ſpares us guilty wretches, but puniſhes his immaculate Son in our ſtead; when he bids the ſword of Juſtice paſs by our devoted heads, and ſheath itſelf in the heart of his beloved Son; can we reſiſt ſuch heavenly goodneſs? can we ſpurn ſuch bowels of mercy? Muſt not love, ſo divine and infinite, melt even the moſt obdurate heart; make us fling down, with abhorrence, the weapons of rebellion, and conſtrain us, ſweetly conſtrain us to obedience †?

Let me now, conformably to my ſacred commiſſion, beſeech you all to be reconciled. Eſpecially let me beſeech the humble penitent, and the haughty ſelf-righteous moraliſt.—Ye humble penitents, that are convinced of ſin, and mourn for ſin, be of good comfort. GOD has abounded in the riches of his grace towards you, and has given you a ranſom to rely on, of higher dignity than all heavens, of more value than all worlds. The men of Tyre made Blaſtus the king's chamberlain their friend ‡; the GOD of glory has conſtituted his dear Son, your atoning ſacrifice, your prevailing advocate. The men of Tyre deſired conditions of peace; the LORD JESUS hath both obtained

* 1 Sam. xxiv. 16.

† Mr Hervey had added, by way of a note, the following words, in the copy which he tranſcribed, and from which this is printed: "When I preached this ſermon, I recapitu-"lated, in this place, (as you, or any reader may do if he "pleaſes,) the preceding heads; but I thought it unneceſſary "to tranſcribe ſuch a recapitulation."

‡ Acts xii. 20.

obtained and fulfilled the conditions of your peace. Could there be a more glorious perſon choſe to act as your reconciler, than the Prince of heaven, and Heir of all things? could there be a more effectual method of reconciliation, than his obedience unto death, even the death of the croſs?—Fly then to this all-ſufficient Redeemer. Rely on his moſt meritorious and ſatisfactory ſufferings. Be your ſins ever ſo numerous, ever ſo enormous, theſe need be no bar to your acceptance. For GOD has received an atonement; an infinite atonement GOD has received. So that he can admit you to his favour, unworthy as you are, without the leaſt blemiſh to his avenging juſtice. He can, he will admit you, as freely, as if you had never done amiſs. Truſt therefore in your reconciling Saviour. Place a chearful confidence in his propitiating merits. Only let the grace of GOD, which has appeared with ſuch tranſcendent lovelineſs in the bleeding *JESUS*, let this grace teach you, with a prevailing efficacy, "to "deny all ungodlineſs and worldly luſts, and to live "ſoberly, righteouſly, and godlily in this preſent "world."

As to thoſe of a contrary character, who are righteous in their own eyes, what ſhall I ſay? Shall I decry the exerciſe of morality, or diſparage the duties of holineſs? GOD forbid. The goſpel is a doctrine according to godlineſs, and true holineſs is the health, is the happineſs of the ſoul. Theſe duties, iſſuing from faith, and recommended by the interceſſion of *CHRIST*, are acceptable to the divine Majeſty. But theſe are *not* your SAVIOUR. GOD has not reconciled the world to himſelf by their *own* pious practices, but by his Son *JESUS CHRIST*. —Can your charitable deeds expiate your innumerable offences? As ſoon may a ſingle drop of pure water correct and ſweeten the unfathomable brine of the ocean. Can your defective performances ſatisfy the demands of a perfect law, or your wandering devotions

tions screen you from the displeasure of an injured GOD? As well may your uplifted hand eclipse the sun, or intercept the lightening when it darts through the bursting cloud.—There is no other name given under heaven, whereby you may be reconciled to GOD, and saved from wrath, but only the name, only the name, remember, of *JESUS CHRIST*. Here fix your hopes, and you shall never be disappointed. Fix them on any other object, and everlasting confusion will ensue.—We beseech you therefore, in GOD's stead, we beseech you for your own souls sake, reject not this abundant mercy, neglect not this *GREAT SALVATION*.

Now, unto him who has reconciled us to himself, and washed us from our sins in his Son's blood, be glory and thanksgiving, love and obedience, henceforth and for ever.

A DEFENCE, *by* R. Y. *of the foregoing sermon, from the groundless objections raised against it by some inconsiderate readers.*

IT is scarcely credible, that any one should assert, that Mr Hervey's posthumous sermon on the *Ministry of reconciliation, is contradictory to the dialogues in Theron and Aspasio, and affirm that it has done injury to the work*.—But such an assertion is easily refuted.—This complaint is either lodged by the friends or foes of the deceased: If by his friends, then I suppose it is because the doctrine of imputed righteousness, which makes so great a figure in those dialogues, is not mentioned in the sermon.—These people would do well to consider, that if it is not mentioned, it is strongly implied; and what is strongly implied in this place, cannot be contradictory to what is expressed in others. In that sermon, do we not read in the strongest terms, "That our iniquities are imputed to Christ,

" Chriſt, by the Father's admitting him to ſtand " in our ſtead, and exacting from him the puniſhment " which we had incurred?" Do we not here find, " GOD reconciling us to himſelf, not only by the hu- " miliation, but by the ſufferings of the Prince of " heaven? and not by ſome ſlighter ſufferings, but by " his ſufferings unto death; and not by his undergoing " a common death, but the moſt ignominious and " tormenting of all deaths, the death upon the croſs."

And as we find the imputation of our ſins ſo plainly aſſerted here, ſo we find in the Dialogues, that " this part of our Lord's meritorious humiliation " is by a very uſual figure put for the whole. The " death of Chriſt includes, not only his ſufferings, " but his obedience. The ſhedding of his precious " blood, was at once the grand inſtance of his ſuffer- " ings, and the finiſhing act of his obedience. In " this view it is conſidered, and thus it is interpreted " by his own ambaſſador, who, ſpeaking of his divine " Maſter, ſays,—*He was obedient unto death, even* " *the death of the croſs.*—When the ſcripture aſcribes " our juſtification to the death of Chriſt, we are " not to think that it would ſet aſide, but imply his " obedience." (*Theron* and *Aſpaſio*, vol. II. p. 348.) Now, if we are not to think this of the ſcripture, in Mr Hervey's opinion, how then can we think it of him? And, without thinking it, where lies the inconſiſtence between the ſermon and the dialogues?

But I rather imagine, that the charge is brought by Mr Hervey's enemies. Some of theſe people, to avoid being thought Socinians, ſeem willing to allow the ſatisfaction of Chriſt, while they declare againſt the doctrine of juſtification by the imputation of his righteouſneſs; and ſuch are extremely willing to interpret Mr Hervey's ſilence into a conſent to their own pernicious ſentiments: *Theron* and *Aſpaſio* is a dead

dead weight upon them; they have not, nor can they anſwer it; willingly, therefore, would they come off, by ſaying, the author had contradicted himſelf. But falſe is their pretence, and as falſe is their profeſſion. *That they allow the ſatisfaction of* CHRIST for imputation, is as reaſonable, and as juſtifiable in the one caſe as in the other; they both ſtand upon one and the ſame footing, ſo he that throws down one throws down both; whoever rejects the doctrine of our Saviour's righteouſneſs being imputed unto man, rejects, by ſo doing, the doctrine of man's ſins being imputed to our Saviour, and all the conſequences of it; or, in other words, he who rejects the doctrine of free juſtification, rejects, by ſo doing, the doctrine of Chriſt. (See *Theron* and *Aſpaſio*, vol. II. p. 170.)

As the main deſign in writing *Theron* and *Aſpaſio*, was to prove the fundamental doctrine of juſtification by the imputed righteouſneſs of Chriſt; and as it appears that the ſermon does not contradict it in this moſt important article; I ſuppoſe it will be allowed, that the charge of contradiction, as to what is moſt material, is entirely got over. But, perhaps, in a matter of leſs conſequence, it may ſtill be objected, that Mr Hervey, in the Dialogues, appears plainly to be Calviniſtic, in the doctrine of PARTICULAR redemption; but, in the ſermon, he ſays expreſsly, that Chriſt's *death is a full, perfect, and ſufficient ſacrifice for the ſins of the* WHOLE *world*.—The church of England ſays this, as well as Mr Hervey, in the office for the communion; and yet no unprejudiſed perſon will queſtion, but ſhe is perfectly Calviniſtical in her articles and homilies.

The truth is, there is no Calviniſt but will allow, that the ſatisfaction of Chriſt is full, perfect, and ſufficient for ALL; but then they diſtinguiſh between the ſufficiency and efficiency of his ſacrifice. With regard to the value of the oblation, it is ſufficient for the

the redemption of every man; with regard to its efficacy, as every man is benefited by the death of Chriſt, ſo Chriſt died for him; but theſe benefits are not of one kind.—Some are common to every man; all the earthly bleſſings which unbelievers enjoy, are the fruits of Chriſt's death; ſo far as they are benefited by him, ſo far he died for them; other benefits belong to the members of the viſible church, and are common to all thoſe who live under the goſpel: many graces ſuch may receive from Chriſt, which, through their own fault, are not ſaving, and ſo far as they are benefited by Chriſt, ſo far Chriſt died for them: other benefits ſtill, according to the will of God, and the intention of the Mediator, are peculiar to thoſe which he himſelf ſays are given unto him by the Father; his ſheep, his elect, ſuch as a true faith, regeneration, ſanctification, adoption, &c. In this ſenſe, ſays thoſe Chriſtians called Calviniſts, Chriſt died for his people only, to bring them effectually to grace and to glory.—This ſyſtem only is conſiſtent with Mr Hervey's notion of free grace.

The Arminian ſcheme is, That Chriſt died with a purpoſe to make the ſalvation of every man in the world poſſible, without any manner of difference, whether they are believers or unbelievers: That he died, not to bring any man actually to ſalvation, and make him a partaker of righteouſneſs and life, but to purchaſe a poſſibility of ſalvation and reconciliation, ſo far as that God might, conſiſtent with his juſtice, receive men into favour, upon condition of faith and repentance. This faith and repentance, ſay they, Chriſt merited not; for if he had, then God had been bound to give them unto every man, and ſo every man muſt have been ſaved. Thus, you ſee, according to theſe gentlemen, Chriſt died equally for all the world; and the reaſon why ſome are ſaved, lies wholly in themſelves, in attaining to that faith

and

and repentance, by the good uſe of their natural powers, which Chriſt did not purchaſe for them. This is the meaning of every Arminian *, let him expreſs himſelf however he will. And how far this is inconſiſtent

* That the reader may ſtill more clearly apprehend the doctrine of Mr Hervey, who was a Calviniſt,—and the difference between *him* and the Arminians, the following note is ſubjoined.

"The Arminians are ſuppoſed by ſome, (who are not ſufficiently acquainted with their tenets,) to maintain that we are to do *ſomething* for ourſelves, and Chriſt to do the reſt; or, in other words, that we have *partly* a righteouſneſs of our own, and that Jeſus Chriſt is to make up the deficiencies of that righteouſneſs. This, however, is not the common divinity of the Arminians. They have no ſuch notion of a *patch-work* juſtification, or that we are ſaved *partly* by the imputation of Chriſt's merits to make up the deficiencies of our own. But the principles of their ſcheme are briefly theſe:—That Chriſt is the *ſole* and *only* author of our ſalvation, not by *imputing* his righteouſneſs to us, but by *purchaſing* ſuch *favourable terms* of reconciliation for us, and by *reſtoring* to us ſuch *abilities* to fulfil them, by means of which we can only become *capable* of being juſtified in the ſight of God. Therefore we ſay, that thoſe in this life, who have uſed well the *grace* that is *given* them, and conformed to the terms of the goſpel, *God doth juſtify:* That is, were he to call them to the bar of judgment and try them, he would acquit or pronounce them not guilty.—Becauſe Chriſt, by his meritorious death and ſufferings, having purchaſed for them the *law* of *repentance*, as the law by which they are to be judged and tried; and they having *through grace* fulfilled the law, *i. e.* become *true penitents*, God therefore, *for the above merits of Chriſt*, admits of their qualifications, forgives them their offences, and rewards them as if they had never offended. Here then is no *ſplitting* of the *imputation*, no *copartnerſhip* with Chriſt: but Chriſt's righteouſneſs is repreſented, as the *ſole procuring cauſe* of our ſalvation, and ours as only the *applying cauſe*, by performing the requiſite conditions: *i. e.* They both tend to different *ends;* one to *procure* the terms of juſtification, and the other to *perform* them.—So that, in ſhort, according

ent with Mr Hervey's exhortation to the self-righteous moralist, in the close of this sermon, I believe I need not tell you. Indeed, Mr Hervey engages not here in the controversy at all; but (going upon what both sides are agreed in, *viz.* the sufficiency of Christ's sacrifice to save all that will believe) he invites all his hearers to fly unto him for salvation. Now, if he never enters into the merits of the cause, how can he be guilty of inconsistency?

Upon the whole, then, this is a most excellent sermon. As the dialogues in *Theron and Aspasio* were, so is this, the true offspring * of him who now rests from his labours, and his works do follow him; the offspring of him who always sought to exalt the Saviour, to humble the sinner, and to promote holiness.

The

"ing to this scheme of the Arminians, our justification is not "*made up partly* of Christ's righteousness, and *partly* of our "own; for his righteousness is not *partly* imputed, but not "at *all* imputed, in the Calvinistical sense of imputation. In "order to make this difference of opinion still clearer, it must "be observed, that the Calvinists (being accustomed to their "ideas of *imputative* righteousness) imagine, that when the "Arminians affirm the necessity of *inherent* righteousness. in "order to justification, that they mean a borrowing of Christ's "imputative righteousness to make up the deficiencies of our "own. Whereas the Arminians, indeed, suppose, that Christ "did not, *in any degree*, fulfil the terms of justification *in our* "*stead*; but, on the contrary, having *purchased* them for us, "and *procured* us *sufficient* powers and abilities of *performing* "them, he left us to co operate with those powers, and so to "fulfil them ourselves." This is a fair, candid, and consistent state of the Arminian doctrine. No one can say it is misrepresented; for 'tis here given in the very words of an eminent divine, and dignitary of the church of England, who is himself an Arminian.—How much superior the Calvinistic (which was Mr Hervey's) doctrine is, to humble the sinner, to exalt the Saviour, and to promote holiness, let every reader judge.

* The sermon itself, in Mr Hervey's own writing, is now in the hands of the Rev. Mr Robert Knight, the present Rector of Weston-Favell, who married Mr Hervey's youngest sister.

The Knowledge of Salvation precious in the Hour of Death;

PROVED IN A

SERMON

Preached, *January* 4. 1759,

Upon the DEATH of

The Rev. Mr JAMES HERVEY.

By W. ROMAINE, M.A.

Lecturer of *St Dunstan's in the West*, London.

Righteousness delivereth from death. PROV. x. 2.

LUKE ii. 29, 30.

LORD, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word: for mine eyes have seen thy salvation.

ACCORDING to the ancient prophecies, in the fulness of time, God sent forth his Son. He came to his own, when there was a general expectation of his birth. Many just and devout persons in *Jerusalem* were then looking out for the Redeemer's coming in the flesh; and among them good old

Simeon, and *Anna* a prophetess, are particularly mentioned. St *Luke* says, *There was a man in* Jerusalem, *whose name was* Simeon, *and the same man was just*, a justified person, *and devout*, fearing to offend God, as the *Greek* word signifies, *waiting for the consolation of* Israel; he was waiting for the incarnation of the divine Comforter, by whose birth all the promises of comfort were to be ratified and fulfilled, and the *Israel* of God was to receive everlasting consolation. The Lord was pleased to vouchsafe a particular revelation of his will in this matter to Simeon; *For the Holy Spirit was upon him, and it was revealed unto him by the Holy Spirit, that he should not see death before he had seen the Lord's Christ* incarnate. And he came by direction of the Spirit into the temple; and when the parents brought in the holy child *Jesus*, to do for him after the custom of the law, then took he him up in his arms, and blessed God that he had lived to this happy hour, when he could take up the prophet's words, and say, *Lo this is our God, we have waited for him, and he will save us; this is the Lord, we have waited for him; we will be glad and rejoice in his salvation.* Simeon waited to see God incarnate; and having seen him, he wanted to live no longer. He desired his dismission. All the ends of living were answered; and therefore he put up this sweet prayer; —*Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word: for mine eyes have seen thy salvation.*

With these same words one of our dear brethren, now with the Lord, finished his course. They were the dying words of the Rev. Mr *James Hervey*. He had long desired to depart, and to be with Christ, which he knew was far better than to abide in the flesh; but he waited patiently for the Lord's time; and when it was come, he thus expressed the thankfulness of his heart, *Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, according to thy* most holy and comfortable

able *word: for mine eyes have seen thy* precious *salvation* *.—The Lord heard him, and gave him a gentle dismission. He died, as he had lived, in a perfectly even and calm composure of mind. Death shewed that he came to him as a friendly messenger to call him to glory, for he chearfully obeyed the summons. There was no fear, no struggle, not a sigh or groan, but he departed in peace, and in full assurance of faith. Oh that you and I, my brethren, may so live by the faith of the Son of God, that when we come to die, we may be able to use this same prayer, and may receive of the Lord a like gracious answer.

These sweet dying words of our dear brother have made a great impression upon several of his acquaintance: for they have been led to consider them more closely than perhaps they ever did before, and several have meditated upon them with great comfort. In order that others might do the same, and that his happy death might be the means of stirring up many to seek to die the death of the righteous, and that their latter end might be like his, I have determined to speak upon the words this day. May the same Spirit by which Simeon spake them be in all your hearts! may he teach you their true and full meaning, and in God's due time may he give you the comfortable experience of them! Under his guidance let us consider,

First, That when Simeon had seen the salvation of God, he was prepared to depart:

Secondly, He therefore desired it, and prayed for it; and,

Thirdly, He expected he should depart in peace according to God's word, which was fulfilled to him.

And,

* Several particulars in this sermon respecting Mr Hervey, are more fully related in the account of his life prefixed to vol. I.

And, under each of these particulars, I shall speak of the experience of our deceased brother.

First, Simeon had it revealed to him by the Holy Spirit, that he should not die until he had seen the Lord's Christ; and when Jesus was brought into the temple, he was directed to go and receive him for the promised Messiah; and taking him up in his arms, he blessed God, and said, *Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word: for mine eyes have seen thy salvation.* It is evident he spoke these words in their primary sense, of his seeing *Jesus* with the eyes of his body; but this could have been no great cause of joy to him, unless he had before seen Christ some other way; for multitudes saw him with their bodily eyes, while he was upon earth, who were no better for the sight; and multitudes will hereafter see him in his glorified body, but it will be to their everlasting confusion. There is another kind of sight to which our church referred you this afternoon, when each of you took up these words, and said, For *mine* eyes have seen thy salvation. If you knew what you said, and spoke the truth, as you had experienced it, you meant that you had seen the salvation of God with the eye of faith; according to what is said of Moses, *That by faith he saw him who is invisible*, (Heb. xi. 27.) He saw him by the eyes of his soul, who was invisible to the eyes of his body; for the soul has its eyes as well as the body: but sin darkened them; it put them into the state in which the eyes of the body are when they have no light: then they can see nothing. So the soul is said, in scripture, to be in darkness and blindness, until the eyes of the understanding be enlightened. They cannot see any spiritual objects until the Sun of Righteousness shine upon them; nor, when he does shine, can they see any loveliness in those objects, until they be able to act faith upon them; for the eye of faith not only beholds the object, but also distinguishes its own interest

eſt in it. Faith keeps all the ſenſes of the ſoul in act and exerciſe upon the proper object, which each apprehends; here the eye of faith is fixed upon ſalvation, not only viewing it as a bleſſing belonging to others, but alſo appropriating it to itſelf. *Mine eyes have ſeen thy ſalvation:* here *Simeon*, ſpeaking of our Saviour, calls him *ſalvation*, becauſe all ſalvation is in and from him. He is the author, and he is the finiſher of it. The great plan of it was laid by the co-equal and co-eternal Perſons of the ever-bleſſed Trinity, before the foundation of the world; it was carried into execution by our divine Saviour in the fulneſs of time; and he is an eternal ſalvation, an eternal deliverance from all evil, and an eternal poſſeſſion of all good. Upon the entrance of ſin into the world, this great ſalvation of our God was revealed, and by faith believers under the Old Teſtament-diſpenſation enjoyed the benefits of it. At the appointed time *Jehovah* took a body of fleſh, and our divine *Immanuel* ſtood up to ſave his people from their ſins. He undertook to ſatisfy all the demands of law and juſtice. The law he ſatisfied, by paying it a perfect unſinning obedience; which being a divine, as well as a human obedience, did therefore magnify the law, and make it more honourable, than if all the creatures in heaven and earth had never offended againſt it. Juſtice he ſatisfied, by enduring the threatened puniſhment; and after his ſufferings and death, juſtice had no more demands upon him: for he came out of the priſon of the grave with a full diſcharge. This ſatisfaction, made to law and juſtice by the obedience and ſufferings of the Lord *Jeſus*, is what the ſcripture calls the *righteouſneſs of God*, becauſe it is a divine and infinitely-perfect righteouſneſs, a divine righteouſneſs wrought out by *Jehovah* himſelf, and as infinitely perfect a righteouſneſs as *Jehovah* could make it. In this all-glorious righteouſneſs of the God man, Chriſt Jeſus, conſiſts the ſinner's ſalvation: for he is accepted and juſtified

juſtified by it; the fruits of this righteouſneſs are his ſanctification, and the robe of this righteouſneſs is his glorification. So that ſalvation in time and in eternity depends upon the righteouſneſs of the incarnate God. This is the fundamental doctrine of the Chriſtian religion, for which our dear brother was a noble champion. He ſaw, he experienced the importance of it, and therefore in his converſation and in his preaching it was a favourite topic. How ſweetly, how profitably have I heard him dwell upon it! and how excellently has he defended it in his writings? Read his *Theron* and *Aſpaſio*; and when you are thoroughly convinced that Chriſt is the end of the law for righteouſneſs to every one who believeth, and can ſay with faith, "In the Lord have I righteouſneſs and ſalvation;" then your mind will be ſettled in peace and comfort, and you will be delivered from thoſe dangerous errors which are now propagated concerning the righteouſneſs of the Lord Jeſus. Thank God for the maſterly defence of it in theſe dialogues *. In them Mr

* About a week before Mr Hervey was taken ill, I mentioned to him a report that was ſpread about, concerning Mr Sandeman's *Letters on Theron and Aſpaſio*, to this effect: That he (Mr Hervey) had written a letter to Mrs Cooke, and therein had ſaid, that Mr Sandeman was in the right, and had convinced him of his error; or words to that purpoſe. To which he anſwered, That he had written a letter to Mrs Cooke, and therein he had acknowledged, that many of Mr Sandeman's remarks were judicious, and that he had corrected ſome of his expreſſions and inaccuracies. But, he ſaid, that he was very far from having changed his opinion as to the ſubſtance and matter of the argument; for therein he thought Mr Sandeman was entirely wrong. Whereupon I deſired he would inſert an advertiſement in ſome of the London papers, ſigned by himſelf, to ſet this miſtake right, leſt it might hinder the ſale and reading of his books, and thereby prevent much good. To which he agreed; and added, that he would let that paragraph ſtand in his *anſwer to Mr Weſley*, relating to Mr Sandeman, only ſoftening

Mr Hervey, being dead, yet ſpeaketh the praiſes of his adorable Redeemer, and clearly proves that we have our ſalvation through his righteouſneſs. *Immanuel* the Saviour is the juſtifier, as he ſays himſelf, *If.* xlv. 21, 22. "There is no God elſe beſide me, "a God that gives righteouſneſs, and a Saviour, there "is none beſide me. Look unto me, and be ye ſaved, "all the ends of the earth; for I am God, and there "is none elſe." How could they be ſaved by looking unto Chriſt? Certainly, not by a look of their bodily eyes. Simeon's joy did not ariſe from having Chriſt in his arms, and looking upon him; but from being able to look upon him by an act of faith. He knew him to be *his* Saviour. Thence aroſe his joy, and from thence muſt yours ariſe. It is the look of faith which ſaves; the eye of faith kept in exerciſe upon its proper object, even upon Jeſus, the author and finiſher of faith. It is this act of faith which our Lord requires:—*Look unto me*, with this promiſe annexed, *and be ye ſaved*. There is ſalvation in the look of faith: for it ſees and receives Jeſus, as he is offered in ſcripture, for a free, full, and complete Saviour. And whoever keeps the eye of faith in conſtant exerciſe is prepared, with good old Simeon, to depart in peace: becauſe, by having an intereſt and property in the ſalvation of our God, he is thereby delivered from every thing that can make death dreadful, and is in poſſeſſion of every thing that can make death deſirable.

What is it that makes death dreadful? Is it not guilt in the conſcience, accuſing the ſinner for the breach of the holy law, and alarming him with fear of the threatened puniſhment, which the juſtice, and holineſs,

ſoftening the expreſſion a little: but all this was prevented by his illneſs and death. The truth of this I am ready to atteſt.

ABRAHAM MADDOCK,
Curate of Weſton-Favell.

holineſs, and truth of God are concerned to ſee inflicted, in time and in eternity? Thus we read, "The "ſting of death is ſin, and the ſtrength of ſin is the "law." Death has power to ſting, ſo long as the broken law gives ſin a right to accuſe and condemn: all unpardoned ſinners therefore are afraid of death. From this ſtate of fear and bondage our Lord came to ſave his people: "He came to deliver them, who "through fear of death were all their life-time "ſubject to bondage;" and he does deliver them, when their ſins are forgiven, and his righteouſneſs is imputed to them: for then the broken law cannot condemn, nor juſtice puniſh, there being no condemnation to them that are in Chriſt Jeſus. Upon which death loſes its ſting; and when the pardoned ſinner looks upon it, he ſees nothing terrible in its appearance, but can boldly and without preſumption ſay, "Yea, when I walk through the valley of the "ſhadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou my "God art with me."

And he is not only prepared to die becauſe he is delivered from every thing that could make death dreadful, but alſo becauſe he is in the poſſeſſion of every thing that can make death deſirable. He knows he has an intereſt in Chriſt, and Chriſt is the poſſeſſor of heaven and earth. He has all things in his hands, and has promiſed to make them all work together for the good of his redeemed people: ſo that whoever has Chriſt has all things. "All things," ſays the apoſtle, "are yours, whether life or death, or things preſent "or things to come, all are yours." And the reaſon follows, "and ye are Chriſt's, and Chriſt is "God's." As all that Chriſt has is yours, and all that God has is Chriſt's, conſequently all is yours. And death by name is yours: no longer a curſe and a puniſhment, but turned into a real bleſſing; for it is the gate and entrance, through which you paſs into endleſs life and never-fading glory.

Thus

Thus he is prepared to depart, who has seen with the eye of faith the salvation of God. The doctrine is clear from scripture; but how is it, my brethren, in your experience? Are you prepared to depart? and on what do ye build your preparation? on the Lord Jesus, or on what? Search and see; for nothing can comfort you in the hour of death, but having received him into your hearts by faith and love. You must see his salvation, and be able to keep the eye of faith intent upon it, before you can be prepared to depart: but when this is your happy case, then in whatever shape death comes, you will be able to say with our dear brother, *Lord, now letteſt thou thy ſervant depart in peace, according to thy word: for mine eyes have ſeen thy ſalvation.* He might well say, Mine eyes have seen thy salvation: for all that came near him were convinced that he had seen it. The effects shewed it. He had put off the old man, and had put on the new; and was under the influence of divine love to his adorable Saviour. The love of Jesus ruled in his heart; and was therefore constantly uppermost in his mouth. He loved to be telling of his salvation all the day long. And he did not talk like a professor full of mere head-knowledge; but what he spake had a warmth, and life, and power in it, which shewed that it came from his heart. He was perfectly inflamed with the love of his divine Lord and Master; and if you sat any time in his company, you could not help catching some of the holy flame. So that if strangers to his person may doubt of his experience of a Saviour's love, we who have conversed with him cannot. We are sure from what we saw and heard, that he had seen the salvation of God, and therefore was prepared to depart. He knew in whom he had believed, and was certain the power and the love of the dear *Immanuel* were in his interest; so that neither death, nor he that had the power of death, could hurt him.

A friend of mine was much with him on the 15th of *December*, and the discourse turned upon what Christ had done for his soul. Mr Hervey spake strongly and earnestly of the assurance of his faith, and of the great love of God in Christ to him. He declared, that the fear of death was taken from him; and it afterwards appeared, that death had no sting to hurt, nor the grave any power to get victory over him: for when death came, it found his mind in perfect peace. He had no uneasy apprehensions of dying, but had hopes full of glory and immortality. Doubtless then he had seen the salvation of God. The knowledge of salvation had been precious to him in life, and therefore he experienced the preciousness of it in death: for then he could give thanks to God for giving him the victory through Jesus Christ his Lord. Happy are they to whom God has given the knowledge of their salvation; they believe on good grounds, that their Saviour has brought them into a state of salvation; and therefore they are prepared to meet death, yea they can desire and pray for it, as Simeon did; which is the second particular I was to consider.

Simeon knowing that he was prepared, therefore desired to depart. And this is the believer's case. He longs for death, not out of an impatient discontented temper, but out of a real holy affection. When worldly men are oppressed with troubles on all sides, and see no way to escape, they are apt to desire death, that it may bring their misery to an end, and put them out of their pain. And there are some most miserable and abject cowards, who murder themselves to get rid of the troubles of life. These men court death as a less evil, but the believer desires it as a real blessing. He knows that his death will be to the glory of his Saviour; for it grieves him to the heart that he should ever do any thing displeasing to such a kind Benefactor. After receiving so many tokens of Christ's love, O! it is indeed afflicting

afflicting to give him the leaſt offence. I appeal to yourſelves. You that have the love of Jeſus in your hearts, are not you ſorry that you love him ſo little? Have not you reaſon daily to mourn for your ingratitude to him? and what will ſuch thoughts ſuggeſt, but a deſire to be where the very occaſion of offence will be removed? It was on this account that Mr Hervey deſired death: for the laſt morning of his life, when his brother came in to inquire after his welfare, he ſaid, I have been thinking of my great ingratitude to my God. And theſe thoughts made him wiſh to be delivered from the bondage of corruption, into the glorious liberty of the children of God.

And he deſired it as Simeon did, and all believers do, upon another motive, namely, becauſe the Lord will get himſelf honour, by the honour which he will give to his people in his kingdom. *He will be glorified*, ſays the apoſtle, *in his ſaints;* he will get himſelf glory by the great glory which he will beſtow upon them. And as the believer has, in all things, an eye to God's glory, ſo has he eſpecially in his deſires to be diſſolved and to be with Chriſt. He knows that God is glorified in him, and by him at preſent; but then it is imperfectly, and that grieves him. Self, or the creature, will be trying to ſhare the heart with God, and thereby to rob him of his glory. A bare thought of this, when only riſing in the mind, hurts the believer. He would have every thought brought into ſubjection to Chriſt; and that makes him deſire to be where temptation and ſin ſhall be no more, and where he ſhall glorify God, and God ſhall be glorified in him for ever and ever. With this view Mr Hervey deſired to depart. His great love to his Saviour's glory made him wiſh for death. He longed to be diſſolved, that he might be freed from the frailties and infirmities of this mortal life, under which he laboured, and could not always, nor in a perfect degree, promote the glory of his redeeming God; therefore he deſired to be with them who follow the

the Lamb whithersoever he goeth, and are ever receiving glory from him, and ever giving glory to him. And the Lord granted his desire; he literally answered his prayer; for he departed in peace, according to the word of God, as I purposed to shew under my *third* head.

What it is to be at peace with God, and to depart with a sense of this peace upon our minds, I cannot better express, than in the excellent words of the present Archbishop of Canterbury, in his *Nine Sermons*, p. 132. "*The peace of God* is that sense of being in "friendship with him, that feeling of comfort and "joy flowing from him, *which passeth all understand-* "*ing*, exceeds the conceptions of those who have not "experienced it, and will exceed hereafter the pre- "sent conceptions of those who have." And the believer, even when he is departing this life, has a sense of his being in friendship with God, and has a feeling of comfort and joy flowing from him. This is promised in scripture, and this is fulfilled to them who, being justified by faith, have peace with God: being reconciled to the Father through the Son of his love, they live, and they die in peace.

I suppose some weak in the faith are thinking thus within themselves: "Well, is it so, that true believers "die in peace and joy? I am sure I could not at pre- "sent; for I am dreadfully afraid of death; and "what would not I give to be delivered from these "fears; for they make my life miserable." My brethren, why are you in bondage to them? God offers you deliverance. There are many general promises in his word, that let what will happen to believers, the peace of God shall rule in their hearts. Thus, *Is.* xxvi. 3. "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace whose "mind is staid upon thee." And as it is a perfect, so it is a continual peace. "The Lord of peace himself," says the apostle, 2 *Thess.* iii. 16. "give you peace al- "ways by all means:" for after he has once given this peace,

peace, he makes all means, even the moſt unlikely, tend to the promoting of it; therefore death can by no means weaken, and much leſs deſtroy, this peace of God. Theſe general promiſes he fulfilled to the patriarchs:—for St Paul ſays, *Heb.* xi. 13, "That "they all died in faith:"—they acted faith in their death, and conſequently had a ſweet ſenſe of the peace of God in their hearts when they died, David ſhews us the reaſon of their dying in faith, *Pſal.* xlviii. 14. "This God is our God for ever and ever, he ſhall "be our guide even unto death." They knew that their God would be with them to guide and keep them, when the body returned to duſt, and the ſpirit returned to God who gave it: and therefore David ſpoke for himſelf what each of them alſo could ſay,—"When I walk through the value of the ſhadow of "death, I will fear no evil, becauſe thou my God art "then with me: thy rod and thy ſtaff comfort me "even then," *Pſal.* xxiii. 3. With this faith they looked upon death as diſarmed of its ſting and power to hurt; and therefore they laid down their heads, and fell aſleep in the arms of death, with as much compoſure as any weary traveller ever longed for reſt. They *fell aſleep*. The ſcripture ſpeaks of their death under this beautiful image, to teach us that death was as ſweet to them as ever ſleep was to a hard-labouring man. The faithful fell aſleep quietly and compoſedly. And how ſhould it be otherwiſe? they had no evil to fear; for they were at peace with God. And what could death do to hurt that peace? It does indeed diſſolve all other bonds, but it ſtrengthens this. It is the happy inſtrument of faſtening the bond of peace with a tie which never never can be diſſolved. And when the faithful look upon death in this light, what is there in it but joy and peace, even a joy unſpeakable, and a peace that ſurpaſſeth all underſtanding?

Perhaps ſome of you think this is not always the caſe; becauſe there are very good men who have had ſtrong

ſtrong conflicts and ſtruggles before death. Nay, my brethren, think not ſo wickedly of God. Is it according to his word that the faithful ſhall depart in peace, and do they not? What! can the word of God be broken? No; it ſhall ſtand faſt for ever and ever. And in the caſe which you ſtate, it does not follow that this peace is weakened or deſtroyed, becauſe it is tempted; by no means. The ſenſe of this peace may remain when it is moſt furiouſly attacked; for it is the peace of God. God gave it, and God keeps it; and he may ſuffer the devil to tempt, but not to deſtroy it. The more it is tempted, the more honour redounds to God for preſerving it in the fiery trial. It was more to God's glory to preſerve his children in the fiery furnace, than to have kept them out of it. Doubtleſs he that has the power of death, will make his laſt efforts, and try to ſhake the faith of a dying believer. The devil will then ſet upon him with all his fury. But though he be a roaring lion, yet he is chained; and the almighty Saviour ſo over-rules his malice and rage, that he makes them work together for his glory and his people's good; as he did remarkably in the laſt efforts which the enemy made againſt our dear brother. He ſaw him in great weakneſs of body, and then made a furious onſet againſt his faith; but the dear *Immanuel* was with him, and would not give him over into the enemy's hands. His faith was tried, and it came like gold out of the fire. He knew that it would be tried, and had therefore prepared himſelf for the fiery trial. Speaking of it to a faithful miniſter of Chriſt, who was often with him in his laſt ſickneſs, he ſaid,—"How many "precious texts are there, big with the rich truths "of Chriſt, which we do not comprehend, which we "know nothing of; and of thoſe which we do know, "how few do we remember? *Bonus textuarius eſt* "*bonus theologus*, and that is the armour. The word "of God is the ſword; theſe texts are the weapons,

"which

" which I must use when that subtle spirit, that arch " adversary of mankind, comes to tempt and sift me " in my last conflict. Surely I had need be well pro- " vided with these weapons, I had need have my " quiver full of them, to answer Satan with texts out " of the word of God when he assaults me." Satan did assault him, but found him prepared and armed. Mr Hervey said to his friends the day that he died, " Oh you know not how great a conflict I have," And after he had sat for some time with his eyes constantly lift up towards heaven, and his hands clasped together in a praying form, he said, " Now this great " conflict is over." Jesus made him conqueror over all the powers of darkness; having endeavoured to rob him of his peace; but in vain, they left him in the Saviour's arms, never more to be tempted; and he watched over him with the tenderest love, until he took him home. And when he went, he indeed departed in peace. His body seemed to be ready as well as his soul. When death came, he had not one struggle with it. There was not a single groan or sigh, or any thing that could shew the least unwillingness to depart. He had such a gentle dismission as he had prayed for in Simeon's words. He departed in peace, and fell asleep.

I have now finished what I had to offer upon the three particulars mentioned in my text; and it appears, that when a sinner is convinced of his want of a Saviour, and is convinced that Jesus is such a Saviour as he wants, able and willing to save to the uttermost, and when he is made to see his interest in the perfect complete righteousness of this adorable Saviour, and is assured of it from the word and Spirit of God, and from the fruits of righteousness produced in his life and conversation, then he is prepared to die; then he may desire it with submission to God's will; and whenever death comes, he may expect to depart in peace, according to the word of God. These

great truths I have illuſtrated from ſcripture and from experience, more eſpecially from the experience of our dear brother, now with the Lord, of whom I have ſpoken nothing more than what the words of my text naturally led me to ſay. If I were to attempt to draw the character of this excellent man, I would conſider him in the ſeveral relations in which he ſtood to God and man, and would exhort you to follow him, ſo far as he followed Chriſt. But the compaſs of this diſcourſe will not ſuffer me to enlarge. I can only juſt obſerve ſome particular inſtances, from whence it will evidently appear that he had ſeen the ſalvation of God. He had a clear view of it by the eye of faith, and was able to act faith upon it, for his was a faith working by love. "We love God," ſays the beloved apoſtle, "becauſe he firſt loved us;" becauſe we know by faith that he firſt loved us: ſo that our love is the reflex act of his love to us. And Mr Hervey had great experience of God's love to him, and therefore his heart was full of love to God; and out of the abundance of his heart his mouth ſpake. There was ſuch a ſweetneſs of heart love upon his tongue, that he uſed to ſpeak of the love of the adorable Redeemer, like one who had ſeen him face to face in the fulneſs of his glory. He would, with all the power of language and dignity of ſentiment, ſpeak for a long time together in praiſe of the ever-bleſſed Saviour. But you might plainly ſee, though every body elſe was pleaſed, yet he was not ſatisfied with what he had ſaid. He thought he had not ſaid enough, and what he had ſaid fell far below his Lord's merit. But ſtill he would try again, and indeed was never weary. You could not hear him ſpeak for any time upon this his favourite ſubject, without being convinced that he felt what he ſaid; and if you had any love of God, when you went into his company, his converſation would inflame it. He had an excellency, which I never ſaw to ſo great a degree in any other perſon. He never let an opportunity ſlip

of

of speaking of the love of Christ. He would take occasion from the most common incident, and yet it would not appear forced; for he had a wonderful talent at spiritualizing and improving whatever happened about him; by which means he hindered the conversation from turning upon trifling matters, and, at the same time, kept it up with spirit and usefulness. Having set the Lord always before him, he saw the love of God in every thing, and therefore it is not to be wondered that all objects and events should give him occasion to speak of it. In his last sickness it continued still to be his favourite theme; for whenever my friend, who was much with him, came into the room, he would begin to talk of the love of Christ, and of the great things which Christ had done for him, until his breath failed him; and as soon as he had recovered himself a little, he would proceed upon the same sweet subject; so that he might have truly applied to himself the words of the prophet.—"My mouth shall "be telling of thy righteousness and of thy salvation "all the day long; for I know no end thereof."

This heart-love to God appeared evidently in every part of his character. As a minister, his faith wrought by love to the souls of men in all the offices of his function. While his health permitted him, he watched like a faithful shepherd over his flock. He used to visit them from house to house, and to speak freely to them of the state of their souls; and when the weakness of his body obliged him to drop these religious visits, he would often grieve, that he could not be more useful, and would speak with great concern and uneasiness of his not being able to preach oftener, and to do more for Christ. In the pulpit he was fervent and earnest with his people, and would often exert himself beyond his strength: for he preached the great doctrines of salvation, as one who had experienced the power of them. It was manifest to all who heard him, that he felt what he spake. And when we

ſpeak what we know, and teſtify what we have ſeen, then God bleſſes this experimental preaching. He puts a divine power and energy into it, and renders it effectual to awaken ſinners, to comfort them that mourn for ſin, and to edify and build up the faithful. Mr Hervey had many happy proofs of the uſefulneſs of his preaching for each of theſe purpoſes; and therefore he did not think it enough to preach once a-week on the Lord's-day, but he ſet up a weekly lecture at Weſton-Favell, which was very well attended, and was bleſſed to many of his neighbours, who will be his glory and crown of rejoicing in the preſence of the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, at his coming.

He did not forget that he was a miniſter in his own houſe; for he called his family together twice a-day to ſerve God. It was his cuſtom in the evening, after the ſervants had read the *Pſalms* and the ſecond leſſon, to explain ſome part of what had been read. In this exerciſe he would ſometimes dwell for half an hour; and when he met with a ſweet paſſage upon the love of Chriſt, I have heard him ſpeak for three quarters of an hour, and then he concluded with prayer.

In the morning, when the family were met together, he uſed to aſk the ſervants.—"Well! where was "our text laſt night?" And after they had repeated it, he made them give an account of what had been ſaid upon it; and then he would repeat and enforce his laſt night's diſcourſe, concluding with prayer.

In the afternoon, when he was called down to tea, he uſed to bring his Hebrew Bible or Greek Teſtament with him, and would either ſpeak upon one verſe or upon ſeveral verſes, as occaſion offered. This was generally an improving ſeaſon. The glory of God is very ſeldom promoted at the tea-table; but it was at Mr Hervey's. Drinking tea with him was like being at an ordinance; for it was ſanctified by the word of God and prayer.

As

As a member of society, his faith wrought abundantly by love to his neighbour: for he was full of good works. His charities to the poor were very large; and that he might be liberal to them, he was very frugal in his own expences. He chose rather to clothe the poor, than to give them money. He used to get some judicious person to buy linen, coarse cloth, stockings, shoes, &c. for them at the best hand, alledging that the poor could not buy so good a commodity at the little shops, and with driblets of money. "I am God's steward," says he, "for his poor, and "I must husband the little pittance I have to bestow "upon them, and make it go as far as possible." But where money would be particularly serviceable to a family long afflicted with sickness, or to a prudent housekeeper who had met with great losses in trade, he would give five, ten, or fifteen guineas at a time, taking care it should not be known from whence the money came.

He gave away a great number of good books, with suitable instructions for their use, and especially Bibles. In the blank leaf he frequently wrote something striking, or else stuck in a printed paper, relating to the promises of God in and through Jesus Christ.

Mr Hervey's income was but small, and it may be wondered how he managed it so well as to have such sums to spare for charitable uses; but what money was left, after the family-expences were paid, and all the profits arising from the sale of his books, which was a very considerable sum, he gave away in charity. He made of it a bank for the poor. "And this," says he, "I have devoted to God. I will on no ac- "count apply it to any worldly uses. I write not for "profit or for fame, but to serve the cause of God; "and as he has blessed my attempt, I think myself "bound to relieve the distresses of my fellow-crea- "tures with the profit that comes from this quarter." And he is still relieving them. He was not willing that

that his charities ſhould die with him; for he ordered all the profit ariſing from the future ſale of his books to be conſtantly applied to charitable uſes. Thus, having believed in God, he was careful to maintain good works, knowing that theſe things are good and profitable unto men.

In his private life he was under the influence of the ſame faith, working by love to the will and commandments of God. His holy walking was very exemplary. What he ſaid, in words, concerning his intereſt in the Redeemer's righteouſneſs, he proved by his actions; for he was very ſenſible of the importance of this ſcripture, "He that, ſaith he, abideth in him, ought "himſelf alſo to walk, even as he walked." (1 John ii. 6.) Mr Hervey walked very cloſe after Chriſt; and found that the belief of Chriſt's righteouſneſs being imputed to him for his juſtification, was ſo far from being a licentious doctrine, that it inſpired him with the nobleſt motives to a grateful obedience. His holy life was an excellent recommendation of his principles: for I never ſaw one who came up ſo near to the ſcripture-character of a Chriſtian. God had enriched him with great gifts, and with great graces, and had made him humble: for he was humbled by the power of grace. He had been a very vain proud young man; but the grace of God emptied him of pride and ſelf, and clothed him with humility. Having put on Chriſt, he had put on with him the ornament of a meek and quiet ſpirit; which appeared in his great patience and reſignation to the will of God. He had ſome very ſharp trials of his faith and patience, both from God and from men, and he learned obedience by the things which he ſuffered. It was very remarkable, that in his long illneſs he was never known to fret or be uneaſy; nor did the perſons about him ever hear one angry, or one haſty word come out of his mouth.

The ſame principle of faith working by love was manifeſt

manifeſt in his ſtudies, which he directed to the glory of God. He was once a great reader of the Greek and Roman authors, and his writings ſhew that he had a good taſte for claſſical learning; but for ſome years paſt he chiefly applied himſelf to the ſtudy of the ſacred ſcriptures. God had bleſſed him with a fine underſtanding, and a great memory, which he exerciſed in reading the Bible in the original languages. He was very well ſkilled in the Hebrew, and was an excellent critic in the Greek, and was a ſcribe inſtructed unto the kingdom of heaven, who, like unto a man that is an houſeholder, bringeth forth out of his treaſure things new and old. He had a great veneration for this treaſure of the Old and New Teſtaments. He uſed to talk of them in the higheſt terms, next to that adorable perſon of whom they treat. They were ſweeter to him than honey and the honey-comb; and ſo they will be to every one who reads them, as he did, with faith. Whoever can act faith upon the exceeding great and precious promiſes contained in the ſacred volume, will find ſo much ſweetneſs in it, that he will have but little reliſh left for other books.

As to his writings, I leave them to ſpeak for themſelves. They ſtand in no need of my praiſes. They are in the hands of the public, and every reader will form his own judgment. Oh that the Spirit of the living God may direct it, that whoever reads his writings may learn to have no confidence in the fleſh, but to make mention of Jehovah's righteouſneſs, even of his only.

The time would fail me, if I was to enlarge upon all the particulars of his life and death. That was not my deſign. I only intended briefly to relate ſome things, from whence a tolerable judgment might be formed of Mr Hervey's character. But I cannot finiſh without taking notice of the laſt ſcene of his life, which was very triumphant and glorious. The laſt and great trial of his faith was more precious than

that

that of gold which perisheth. Its preciousness never appeared more than in the hour of death; for then he evidently saw by faith, and apprehended the salvation of God, and could rejoice in a clear view of his own interest in it. When Dr Stonehouse saw him for the last time, namely, on Christmas-day, about two hours before he expired, Mr Hervey pressed home upon him his everlasting concerns, in the most affectionate manner; telling him that here is no abiding place, and begging of him to attend, amidst the multiplicity of his business, to the one thing needful.

The doctor, seeing the great difficulty and pain with which he spoke, (for he was almost suffocated with phlegm and frequent vomitings,) and finding, by his pulse, that the pangs of death were then coming on, desired that he would spare himself. "No," says he, "Doctor, no. You tell me I have but few moments "to live; Oh let me spend them in adoring our great "Redeemer. Though my flesh and my heart fail me, "yet God is the strength of my heart, and my por-"tion for ever." He then expatiated in the most striking manner upon these words of St Paul, 1 Cor. iii. 22, 23. "All things are yours, life and death: for "ye are Christ's." "Here," says he, "is the trea-"sure of a Christian. Death is reckoned amongst this "inventory;—and a noble treasure it is. How thank-"ful am I for death, as it is the passage through which "I pass to the Lord and Giver of eternal life, and as "it frees me from all this misery you now see me en-"dure, and which I am willing to endure, as long "as God thinks fit! for I know he will, by and by, "in his own good time, dismiss me from the body. "These light afflictions are but for a moment, and "then comes an eternal weight of glory. Oh wel-"come, welcome death!—Thou mayst well be reck-"oned among the treasures of the Christian.—To live "is Christ, but to die is *gain*."

After which, as the doctor was taking his final leave of

of him, Mr Hervey expreſſed great gratitude for his viſits, though it had been long out of the power of medicine to cure him.—He then pauſed a little, and, with great ſerenity and ſweetneſs in his countenance, though the pangs of death were then on him, repeated theſe triumphant words—

"Lord, now letteſt thou thy ſervant depart in "peace, according to thy *moſt holy* and *comfortable* "word: for mine eyes have ſeen thy *precious* ſalva- "tion. Here, Doctor, is my cordial. What are all "cordials to the dying, compared to the ſalvation of "Chriſt? This, this ſupports me."—He found this ſupporting him in his laſt moments, and declared it, by ſaying, twice or thrice, *Precious ſalvation!* and then leaning his head againſt the ſide of the eaſy chair in which he ſat, he ſhut his eyes, and fell aſleep. Oh precious ſalvation! how precious muſt it be to the dying man, who, intereſted in it, can thank God for death, and reckon it among his riches; who, ſupported by faith in the ſalvation of God, can account it his gain to die; and can gladly ſay, Oh welcome, welcome death! May this faith ſupport you, my brethren, when all other ſupports fail, and make ſalvation as precious to you as it was to Mr Hervey! and of this you may be aſſured, that what the Lord did for him he is able alſo to do for you. He was indeed a glorious inſtance of the power of grace; for by the grace of God he was what he was. And grace is free; as free for you as it was for him; able alſo to make you live and die as much to the glory of God as he did. He was truly a burning and ſhining light; but the Lord's hand is not ſhortened. It can make your light ſhine alſo before men, and enable you to adorn the doctrine of God your Saviour as much as Mr Hervey did. And the great uſe to be made of his example is, to ſtir you up to glorify God for the gifts and graces beſtowed upon him, and to deſire the ſame

may be bestowed upon you. With this view I shall apply it,

First, To those persons who have never seen the salvation of God, and consequently, are not prepared to depart in peace; and these are all careless sinners, who live secure in the wilful commission of sin. Mr Hervey knew, that whenever the Lord should call him out of this life, he should be found in Christ, not having his own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith; and, clothed in this righteousness, he was certain that he should appear at the bar of justice without spot of sin, unto eternal salvation. But this is not your experience. Nay, you have never been awakened to desire it. You have never been humbled under a sense of your lost condition, nor broken down under a conviction of your helplessness: so that you have never seen your want of a Saviour, and, consequently, have never seen the salvation of our God. If you entertain any hopes of departing in peace, while you are in this state, you are of all men the most deceived; for when death comes, it will find you in your sins unpardoned, without any faith in the Redeemer's righteousness to make death desirable, but with every thing that can make it terrible. The holy, just, and good law of the most high God will accuse, conscience will plead guilty, justice will condemn and punish, and the wrath of God will abide upon you for ever and ever. How is it possible you should depart in peace, unless you die insensible? and that would be dreadful indeed. If sin should so far infatuate you, that you never awake out of its delusive slumbers until you are called to receive the wages of sin, Oh think what sort of a peace you speak to yourselves! since it leaves you in the greatest danger, and, at the same time, insensible of it. To depart in such a false peace, would be your everlasting destruction. Oh Sirs, consider then what a delusion

you

you are under! The wrath of an offended God abideth on you, the curſes of his broken law hang over your guilty heads, and you are liable to the vengeance of his almighty juſtice; and yet you think yourſelves ſafe. You are ſaying, Peace, peace, while all the powers in heaven and earth are at war with you, and in a moment you may be cut off, and delivered over to the tormentors; and then you will have a ſad and eternal experience of that awful threatening, "There "is no peace, ſaith my God, to the wicked."

Men and brethren, what do you ſay to theſe things? Are they true, or are they not? If they be true, why are you not influenced by them? And if you think them not true, why do you make any profeſſion of the Chriſtian religion? why do you come to the houſe of God to attend upon his ordinances? Your appearance here ranks you among profeſſors; and if you keep up the form, without the power of godlineſs, I have for you, in the *ſecond place*, a word of reproof.

There have ariſen, in the latter days, mockers, who pretend to ridicule the ſeeing of the ſalvation of God, and the being thereby prepared to depart in peace. Poſſibly there may be ſome ſuch amongſt us to-day, who laugh at all vital and experimental religion. If there be, I would aſk them, whether the ſcripture has not promiſed deliverance from the fear of death? Is it not written, (Heb. xi. 15.) "That Chriſt came to "deliver them who through fear of death were all "their life-time ſubject to bondage?" Obſerve, they were in bondage to the fear of death, but Chriſt came to deliver them. And did not he attain the end for which he came? Moſt certainly he did. "I have finiſh-"ed," ſays he to his Father, "the work which thou "gaveſt me to do." Now, it was part of the work to deliver his people from the fear of death; and as the work was finiſhed, conſequently they are delivered. And they ſay they are. They atteſt it, and they

have given the moſt convincing proofs of their having conquered all fear of death: they have been afflicted, tormented, ſtoned, ſawn aſunder, put on the rack; and yet they would not accept deliverance, becauſe they were ſure of obtaining a better reſurrection. And of theſe there have not been two or three only, but a noble and numerous army, yea a great multitude, whom no man could number; and, glory be to God, it is an increaſing multitude: there are ſome who daily depart in peace, and there are hundreds, thouſands now alive, who are waiting for their departure with hopes full of immortality; and why ſhould you think they will be diſappointed of their hope? Will Chriſt break his word? can his promiſe fail? No: his word and his promiſe ſhall be eſtabliſhed, when heaven and earth ſhall be no more; and until the place of them ſhall not be found, the Lord will always have ſuch witneſſes of the truth of the doctrine in my text, as Mr Hervey, who will depart this life in the triumph of faith.

Againſt theſe plain facts what can you object? They are founded upon the clear promiſes of ſcripture, which are literally fulfilled at this very day; and you can have no pretence to reject their authority, unleſs you run into downright ſcepticiſm, and deny the authority of the holy ſcriptures. If any of you have arrived at this pitch of ridicule, I ſhall not reaſon with you at preſent. Let the day decide the point. If death does not, judgment will. You will be forced to be tried by that book which you reject, and by that Judge whom you have inſulted and vilified. O that you may be convinced of your error before it be too late! May God open your eyes to ſee your guilt and your danger, that you may ſue for mercy along with them who are ſeeking the experience of the doctrine in my text; to whom I have, in the *third* place, a word of comfort.

I ſuppoſe there are many perſons here, who find the

the ſting of death in their guilty conſciences, and who therefore deſire to be delivered from the fear and from the power of death. My brethren, there is a glorious Deliverer, who has, in his own perſon, conquered death, and him that had the power of death; and he is able to make you conquerors. His power is almighty: for he is the Lord God omnipotent; and he is an all-loving Saviour, who is more ready to give, than you are to aſk, his promiſed help. Since he has ſhewn you your want of it, aſk and you ſhall have, ſeek and you ſhall find.

You do ſeek, you ſay, but it is with many doubts and fears. Of what do you doubt? of Chriſt's power or of Chriſt's love? He can deliver you. All things are poſſible to him, becauſe all power in heaven and earth is in his hands. And he is a God of love; he has ſhewed mercy to the greateſt of ſinners, and has ſhed his love abroad in their hearts. He has given them faith to ſee their intereſt in him, and then they were happy living or dying: for whether they lived, they lived unto the Lord; or whether they died, they died unto the Lord: ſo that living and dying they were the Lord's.

True, ſay you, I believe this was the happy caſe of Mr Hervey, and of many others; but I am full of doubts and fears, becauſe I am ſuch an unworthy creature, that I do not deſerve any mercy. Nor did they: God did not treat them upon the footing of deſert; what he gave them was mere bounty, flowing from the riches of his unmerited love. That is the way in which he beſtows his great ſalvation. All the bleſſings of it are free, as free for one ſinner as for another. None are excluded, becauſe they are great ſinners; Paul found mercy: and none are rejected, becauſe of their unworthineſs; Mary Magdalen was pardoned; and why may not you? For all the gifts of God flow from his free grace, and are beſtowed upon unworthy ſinners; and if you are one of them,

you

you are a proper object to receive the blessings of free grace; and the sense of your unworthiness should make you more earnest in asking, but it is no bar to your receiving, all the blessings of salvation; for Jesus Christ assures us in his word, "that *he* came to "seek and to save that which was lost; such lost sinners as you are.

Thus you see what encouragement you have to believe in God. You have his word and his promise to rely upon; you have the testimony of God's people, declaring that they were once, as you are, afraid of death, but now Christ has taken away the fear of it. They have seen the salvation of God, and know by faith, that all the blessings of it are freely given them in Christ Jesus; therefore they are ready, they desire to depart. May the tender mercies of our God bring every one of you into this happy state! And to those who are already in it, I make my *fourth* remark.

My Christian friends and brethren, you have seen the salvation of God, and are delivered from the fear of death: what return will you make unto the Lord for all the benefits which he hath done unto you? Certainly you will not forget the great things which he has already given you, and the greater things for which you are waiting; and let these considerations constrain you to love this divine Benefactor, and to serve him without fear, in an holy obedience, all the days of your lives. Give evidence of the sincerity of your love, as your Lord requires; "If ye love me, "keep my commandments:"—Keep near to me in my ways, and walk close with me in mine ordinances, and you will not only thereby give proof of your love, but it will also grow exceedingly; and as it grows, your desire to depart will grow with it; for when the love of Christ rules in the heart, you will be ready, yea, you will desire to depart, and to be with him. This was the happy experience of our deceased brother; and let his example stir you up to great care

and

and watchfulneſs in your holy walking heavenwards, that your faith may be always working by love, as he did. Conſider the graces of his life, and ſeek the ſame. Stop not ſhort, but try to get beyond him. Conſider his death. Remember with what perfect aſſurance he ſpake of his intereſt in Chriſt, and what ſtrong proofs he gave of it; and then pray that your faith may ſtand as unſhaken as his was in that great time of trial. And, above all, forget not what ſupported him in his laſt moments; it was the clear view he had of his intereſt in the great ſalvation of God: "This, this," ſays he, "ſupports me,"—now at the approach of death. Oh how precious did ſalvation then appear to him, when he found death coming diſarmed, and without a ſting! and it grew ſtill more precious, when, with his laſt breath, he declared that death had no power to hurt the peace of God, which ruled in his heart; for even then he found ſalvation precious. You need not fear, my brethren, but this will be your happy experience. God has given you the knowledge of ſalvation by the remiſſion of your ſins; and as your faith grows exceedingly, ſalvation will grow exceedingly precious. The greater experience you hereby get of the love of Chriſt, the more will you be ſupported under the trials of life, and the better prepared for the trials of death. You will find, that the ſweet ſenſe of Chriſt's love in the heart, will enable you to rejoice in ſuffering, and then you need not fear but it will enable you to rejoice in the ſufferings of death. For who or what ſhall ſeparate believers from the love of Chriſt? Shall the troubles of life, or the pains of death? ſhall tribulation, or diſtreſs, or perſecution, or famine, or nakedneſs, or peril, or ſword? No; in all theſe things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us. *More than conquerors!* Oh glorious warfare, in which believers not only conquer their enemies, but alſo reap innumerable and endleſs bleſſings to themſelves. Even death

death is to them a real bleſſing; they expect it, they find it ſo, and they are more than conquerors over it, through him that loved them.

In the *laſt* place, I muſt put you all in remembrance, that neither the words of my text, nor what has been ſaid upon them, will be of any benefit without a bleſſing from God. We cannot ſee his ſalvation with the eye of faith, nor experience the power of it, without the help of his grace. It is from him, who has done all for us, that all muſt be done in us; and if ſome good impreſſions have been made this day upon any of your hearts, they will ſoon wear away, unleſs he preſerve and ſtrengthen them. If you deſire, at preſent to live Mr Hervey's life, and to die his death, this deſire will be ineffectual, unleſs it be carried into act by the mighty working of God's Spirit: he is all in all. For which reaſon we always begin and always end the hearing of the word with prayer; being aſſured, that if Paul ſhould plant, and Apollos ſhould water, yet it would be to no purpoſe, unleſs God ſhould give the increaſe. Oh that it may be abundant this day to his glory, and to the good of your ſouls. To that end let us pray—

O almighty and moſt merciful God, we humbly beſeech thee to look down with mercy upon this congregation, and to bleſs the words which we have heard this day with our outward ears. Make them the means of opening the blind eyes which have never ſeen their want of thy ſalvation. Lord, enlighten them, and help them to ſeek, until they find pardon and peace in thee. Be gracious to thoſe who are now waiting upon thee, believing, that after they have ſeen thy ſalvation, they ſhall be able to depart in peace. O Lord God, manifeſt it unto them, and add this day to the number of thoſe who have ſeen and experienced it. We deſire to glorify thee for every living Chriſtian who knows in whom he has believed, and is ready

ready and prepared to depart in peace. We give all the praiſe to the riches of thy free grace. And we alſo bleſs thy holy name for all thy ſervants departed this life in thy faith and love, beſeeching thee to give us grace ſo to follow their good examples, as they followed Chriſt; that with them we may be partakers of thy heavenly kingdom. Grant this, O Father, for Jeſus Chriſt's ſake, our only Mediator and Advocate; to whom, with thee, and the Holy Spirit, three co-equal perſons in one Jehovah, be honour, and glory, and bleſſing, and praiſe, for ever and ever. *Amen.*

REMARKS

ON

LORD BOLINGBROKE'S

LETTERS

ON THE

STUDY and USE of HISTORY;

SO FAR AS THEY RELATE TO THE

HISTORY of the OLD TESTAMENT,

AND ESPECIALLY TO THE

CASE of NOAH, denouncing a Curse upon CANAAN.

In a LETTER to a LADY of QUALITY.

Merses profundo, pulchrior evenit. HOR.

PREFACE.

THE reader will see, from the *date* of the following letter, that it was written a considerable time ago. From which circumstance he will probably conclude, that it was not intended for publication. A conjecture which is perfectly just. The publication is owing to the *Right Honourable* personage, whose name, though it would grace and recommend his papers, the author is not allowed to mention. Her Ladyship's

Ladyſhip's commands, which would admit of no excuſe, drew the remarks from his pen; and her deſire, which with him will always have the force of a command, has brought them to the preſs.—It will give him the higheſt pleaſure, if, while he is paying the debt of obedience and gratitude to a Noble friend, he may ſupport the dignity of the divine word; may raiſe its *eſteem*, and promote its *ſtudy* among men: becauſe then he may reaſonably hope to promote the *beſt intereſts* of his fellow-creatures; and ſubſerve that grand deſignation of the almighty Majeſty, expreſſed by the Pſalmiſt,—*Thou haſt magnified thy word above all thy name* *.

* Pſal. cxxxviii. 2.

A LETTER.

MADAM,

AS you was pleaſed to aſk my opinion concerning LORD BOLINGBROKE's remarks on the *ſcriptural hiſtory*, I have procured the book; have peruſed what relates to the ſubject; and ſubmit to your judgment the thoughts which occurred; aſſuring your Lordſhip, that, though many might diſcuſs the point much more clearly and ſatisfactorily than the perſon you favoured with your commands; yet no one can think it a greater honour to receive them, or a greater pleaſure to execute them.

"The Old teſtament," it is alledged, "is no ſuf-"ficient foundation for *chronology* from the beginning "of time *."—To enter upon the *niceties* of chronology, would, perhaps, be too *difficult* a reſearch; at leaſt, it would require from your Ladyſhip a more

* See *Lord Bolingbroke*'s letters on the ſtudy and uſe of hiſtory, vol. i. p. 98.

painful attention, than I ſhould chuſe to occaſion by any of my letters. And I very frankly own, that I am by no means maſter of the argument, nor equal to the taſk. Others, I don't doubt, whoſe inclination has diſpoſed, and whoſe genius has fitted them for this particular ſtudy, will undertake to decide the queſtion, and give the honour where the honour is due.—This, however, from a very ſcanty ſurvey of the caſe, I can eaſily diſcern; that the chronologer will no where find ſuch *memorable* events for fixing his æras, nor ſuch *early* and *ſubſtantial* aids for computing his time, as from the *Moſaic* monuments, and the ſacred annals.

From the beginning of the world to the flood, we have an *orderly gradation* of time, marked out by the lives of ten eminent patriarchs.—From the flood, we may proceed to that glorious promiſe of a Redeemer, made to *Abraham; In thy ſeed ſhall all the nations of the earth be bleſſed.*—From this promiſe, to the miraculous deliverance of the *Iſraelites* from *Egyptian* bondage.—From thence to the building of *Solomon's* temple; which was an illuſtrious type * of that divine perſon, *in whom dwells all the fullneſs of the Godhead bodily.*—From the building of this magnificent ſtructure, to the demolition of it by the *Babylonian* monarch.—From thence, to the conqueſt of *Babylon* by *Cyrus* the *Perſian.*—And from the reign of *Cyrus*, to that grand, that moſt important of all tranſactions, the death of Meſſiah the Prince; when he *finiſhed the tranſgreſſion, and made an end of ſins, and made reconciliation for iniquity, and brought in everlaſting righteouſneſs* †.

The *intermediate* ſpace, between each of theſe very diſtinguiſhed periods, may, I believe, be aſcertained, to a conſiderable degree of exactneſs, from the ſacred volumes. If ſo, this will conſtitute a more comprehenſive

* Gen. xxii. 18. John ii. 21. † Dan. ix. 24.

prehenſive and perfect ſyſtem of chronology, than can be derived from the *Olympiads* of the *Grecians*, or the *Hegira* of the *Mahometans*; from the *Perſian*, the *Roman*, or any other *epocha*.

But the *hiſtory* of the *Old Teſtament* is much more neceſſary to be known, and much more eaſy to be underſtood. Yet this, my Lord ſuggeſts, is not a *complete* hiſtory of the firſt ages *.—We allow the ſuggeſtion. It neither is, nor has materials for, a complete univerſal hiſtory. It pretends to nothing more, than to relate the affairs of *one* particular family; in which the *church* of GOD was to ſubſiſt, and from which the SAVIOUR *of men* was to ſpring. Nevertheleſs, ſo many *collateral* incidents are touched upon, ſo many branches of this main ſtream are occaſionally purſued, as preſent us with a collection of the moſt *ancient*, the moſt *curious*, and moſt *inſtructive* facts.

Here we are brought acquainted with the *creation* of the world, and the formation of man. The *origin* of *evil*, both natural and moral, is diſcovered in the fall of our firſt parents; and the diſpleaſure of GOD againſt ſin, is manifeſted by the waters of a general deluge.—Here we ſee the preſervation of our ſpecies in the ark, and repeopling of the earth by *Noah*; the invention of polite arts †, and the riſe of uſeful manufactures ‡; the eſtabliſhment of nations, and the founders of their principal kingdoms ‖. Not to add, that theſe records are the royal archives, in which the *charter*

* Pag. 83. † Gen. iv. 21. ‡ Gen. iv. 20, 22.

‖ Gen. chap. x. Which, though but little adverted to, is the nobleſt piece of *geographical antiquity* extant in the world. It ſhews us how the whole earth, from the three ſons of *Noah*, was overſpread, inhabited, and denominated. It diſcovers the *true* ſource of the ſeveral nations; about which profane authors either ſay nothing at all, or elſe ſay what is *chimerical*, *precarious*, *falſe*.

ter of our *sovereignty* * over the creatures is preserved, and the original *draught* of the *covenant* of grace † deposited.—Here then, may we not challenge *any*, or *all* the books, written in every language under heaven? What memoirs go *so far back* into antiquity? what memoirs are *so interesting* to all mankind?—Had they been transmitted to us by any *Grecian* or *Roman* author, how would they have been admired and valued! how lavishly, and indeed how justly, praised!

Another excellency of these writings (and peculiar to these alone) is, That they not only reach backward, as far as the *very birth* of things; but proceed forwards, even into the *remotest futurity*.—They foretold the ruin of *Babylon* ‡, the noblest, the best fortified, and most commodiously situated metropolis in the universe; who said, and no one would have suspected it to be a vain boast, *I shall be a lady for ever* ‖. Yet the scriptures pronounced her utter *destruction* ⊥, and specified the *person* who should bring about this great catastrophe.—They pointed out the place of his *abode* +; —they described him by several *distinguishing* circumstances ++;—they particularized the genius of his *warlike* enterprizes ==;—they mentioned his very *name*;

* Gen. i. 28. † Gen. iii. 15. ‡ Is. xiii. 19. &c. xvi. 23, 24. ‖ Is. xlvii. 7. ⊥ Is. xiii. 19, 20. &c. xvi. 23, 24. + Is. xlvi. 11.

++ That he should besiege and take the most impregnable of cities, *Is.* xlv. 1, 2.;—that he should enrich himself with immense spoils, *Is.* xlv. 3.;—that he should not be a tyrant, but a *shepherd* to the captive *Jews*; should release them from their captivity, and both permit and promote the rebuilding of their temple, *Is.* xliv. 28.

== He is called a *ravenous bird*, Is. xlvi. 11. denoting his *speed*, *activity*, and great *expedition*. Which were more like the flight of a *swift-winged* bird, (this is the exact sense of the original בע than the march of an army, with all its encumbrances. This is acknowledged by *Tigranes*, in his fine expostulatory

name * ;—all this, ſome hundreds of years before the event took place, or the conqueror was born.

They foretold the *rejection* and *calamities* of the diſobedient *Jews ;* who are the chief ſubject of their hiſtory ; (and this, ſurely, could not be with a view to aggrandize their nation, or to anſwer any ſiniſter deſign :) that they ſhould be ſubdued by their enemies, loſe the favour of their God, and the poſſeſſion of their native land ; yet not be *ſettled*, as a *colony*, in ſome particular tract of the victor's dominions, but be *ſcattered abroad* under the whole heavens †.—This was threatened by their JEHOVAH,—this is recorded in their books,—and this is, even *now*, ſo remarkably fulfilled, as to be a fact of the utmoſt notoriety. Go into the moſt polite or moſt barbarous countries, the neareſt or moſt diſtant parts of the world ; you will, every where, find *living evidences* of this ſcriptural prediction.

The ſcriptures ſpeak in the moſt explicit and peremptory terms, with regard to the *reſtoration* of the *Jews* ‡.—This reſtoration could not be effected, at leaſt

tulatory diſcourſe with *Cyrus :* Ταχει δε τοσουτον περιεγενου αυτου, ωστε πορρωθεν εφθουσας ελθων συν πολλω στολω, πριν τουτον την παρ' εαυτω δυναμιν αθροισασθαι. *You ſo far exceed the king of* Armenia *in the ſwiftneſs of your motions, that, before he could get together the few forces quartered in his neighbourhood, you are come from a diſtant country, and have ſurrounded him with a large army.* Xenoph. Cyropæd. lib. III.—Thus *Alexander*, whoſe marches and whoſe victories were almoſt incredibly ſwift, is beautifully and exactly characterized by the prophet *Daniel. As I was conſidering, behold! an he-goat came from the weſt on the face of the whole earth, and touched not the ground.* Chap. viii. 5. No *orator* with all the powers of language, could more *beautifully* have deſcribed the rapidity and the extent of the *Macedonian* conqueſts; nor could any *hiſtorian*, though writing after the accompliſhment of the events, have deſcribed them more *exactly*.

* Iſ. xliv. 28. xlv. 1. † Deut. xxviii. 64. Amos. ix. 9.
‡ Ezek. xi. 17. Amos. ix. 14, 15. Zech. xiv. 10, 11. I have not

leaſt could not be obſerved, if they had been blended and incorporated with the inhabitants of other climes. Therefore, to be a *preſumptive proof* of its accompliſhment; and to render it, when accompliſhed, the *moſt obſervable* of all revolutions; they have ſubſiſted a *diſtinct* people, amidſt all the regions whither they have been driven.—A moſt ſingular and aſtoniſhing circumſtance! How ſoon were the *Danes*, the *Saxons*, and the *Normans*, mingled with the *Britons!* and how *entirely* are they all melted down and loſt among the natives of our iſle! But the *Jews*, like a drop of oil on the water, have continued a *ſeparate* community; and, though *diſperſed* into *all* nations, are not, through the long courſe of ſeventeen hundred years, *embodied* with *any*.—This is ſuch a *peculiarity* in the diſpenſations of providence, as I can never ſufficiently admire: and is, I think, an *undeniable voucher* to the authenticity of the ſcriptures; held forth, as it were by the hand of Omnipotence, in the ſight of all the world.

Such events the ancient ſcriptures foretell, and *ſuch* facts they relate; facts of incomparable *grandeur*, and events of the greateſt *importance*. All which are delivered in ſuch a *majeſtic ſimplicity* of ſtyle, as nothing can

not ventured to determine, whether this reſtoration of the *Jews* is to be underſtood of a return to *their own country*, or of their converſion to the *faith of CHRIST*. Though I think, the latter is the meaning of the Holy Spirit; will be no leſs wonderful than the former; and ſeems to be ſupported by ſuch paſſages as the following.—*They ſhall look on ME, whom they have pierced, and mourn.* The gift of *repentance*, not the circumſtance of *place*, is the material point, Zech. xiii. 10. —*When it ſhall turn*, not the tribes of *Iſrael* to *Jeruſalem*, but the heart of the *Iſraelites to the LORD*, 2 Cor. iii. 16.—Then *all* Iſrael *ſhall be ſaved*, Rom. xi. 26. ſhall be made partakers of the goſpel, of its ſacred privileges, and its great ſalvation. In which they will enjoy all, more than all the bleſſings, which *Canaan* could afford. Of which, that goodly land, in its utmoſt fertility, affluence, and glory, was but a type.

can equal but their preciſe veracity.—Yet *theſe* books Lord *Bolingbroke* diſparages; and, at the ſame time, extols the writings of *Tacitus*.—The remains of *Tacitus*, he tells us, "are precious remains *." Thoſe of the *holy ſcripture* "are dark and imperfect accounts †." In *Tacitus*, "hiſtory preſerves her integrity and her "luſtre ‡." In the *holy ſcripture*, inſtead of hiſtory, you have "an heap of fables; which can pretend to "nothing but ſome inſcrutable truths, and therefore "uſeleſs to mankind ‖."—Every line of *Tacitus* has weight §, and cannot be mentioned without admiration. Whereas, the *ſacred hiſtory* is put upon a level with the extravgancies of *Amadis* of *Gaul* ⊥, and "can never gain ſufficient credit from any reaſonable "man *."

Who is this uncircumciſed Philiſtine, ſaid *David*, *that he ſhould defy the armies of the living GOD* =? And who is this *Tacitus*, would I aſk, this darling author, that *he* ſhould be raiſed to the ſkies, while the *divine* hiſtorians are trodden to the duſt?—If your Ladyſhip is unacquainted with his character, let me give it in the words of a moſt elegant and maſterly critic: "Having "conſidered the principal qualities of *Tacitus* as a "writer and an hiſtorian, I cannot help thinking, "that there is a falſe ſublime and affectation in his "deſcriptions;

* Page 161. † Page 108. ‡ Page 161.
‖ Page 121. § Page 161. ⊥ Page 121.

* Page 118.——If, in the pages I have referred to, and the ſentences I have quoted, my Lord does not aim at the *ſcriptural records*, I ſhall very willingly, nay, *moſt gladly* acknowledge myſelf miſtaken. To me, after a repeated and attentive peruſal of the paſſages, he appears to mean *thoſe*, and thoſe *principally*. He means, according to his own profeſſion, *ſuch ancient hiſtory as he had been deſcribing* (ſee pag. 118.); and I am very ſure, the principal ſubject of the preceding ſheets was the *ſacred*.—But why ſhould not his Lordſhip ſpeak his ſentiments *plainly*? Is it for want of ingenuity? or owing to diffidence in the cauſe?

= 1 Sam. xvii. 26.

'descriptions; a scurrility and satirical vein, with "too epigrammatical a conciseness in his wit; an a-"cuteness, but too speculative, and a policy over-re-"fined in his observations; a malignant and ill-natu-"red turn in his characters; a philosophy too abstract-"ed and elevated in his reasonings, and a vanity in his "learning. In short, that he is in antiquity a pedant; "in the philosophy of nature a sceptic; in morals "loose; in description gaudy and pompous; in po-"litics subdolous, refined, and knavish *."

Yet *this* is the writer that must be placed in such great superiority to *Moses*, *Joshua*, and *Samuel; this* the history (rise Criticism, and resent the indignity!) that is spoken of with applause and rapture, even while the sacred annals are treated with disrespect and obloquy.

I might recount the glorious *privileges* exhibited in this blessed book; the inestimable *promises* made to the righteous; the tenderly-compassionate *invitations* addressed to sinners; the refined and exalted displays of *morality;* with many other noble particulars;—which it is the prerogative of *scripture* to contain,—the wisdom of mankind to believe,—and the only felicity of our nature to be interested in them, and influenced by them.

But my Lord is ready to agree on these topics. He expresses, in some places at least, no dislike of the *doctrinal* and *prophetical* parts. Nay, he has contrived an expedient to rescue them from the dishonour which he would bring upon the *historical*. He allows the former to be written under the inspiration of the holy and

* The treatise, which furnishes me with this extract, is written by Mr *Hunter;* is entitled, *Observations on* Tacitus; and, if my reader has not perused them, I dare venture to assure him, that he has one of the *highest* entertainments in polite literature yet to come. See page 184.

and unerring Spirit. The latter, he affirms, are "purely human, and therefore fallible *."—Proceeding upon this ſuppoſition, he ſcruples not to repreſent them, as the devices of craft, or the blunders of ignorance. †.

I muſt beg leave to obſerve, that ſuch a *diſtinction* is without the leaſt ground of reality to ſupport it; and would, if admitted, be an effectual method to *ſubvert* the whole of revelation. For, if it could be proved, that the authors of this hiſtory were ſo *weak* as to fall into palpable errors, where a common degree of ſagacity would have ſecured them from miſtaking; or if they were ſo *treacherous* as to palm upon the world a multiplicity of forgeries; ſo *impious* as to aſcribe their falſehoods to the GOD of truth; this would at once ruin their *character* as *men*, and deſtroy their *credit* as *writers*. At this rate, who could depend upon their teſtimony in *any* point whatever?

Beſides, many of the doctrinal parts of ſcripture *refer to*, and are *derived from*, the hiſtorical. If the latter were a parcel of impoſitions and miſtakes, what degree of veracity or dignity could the former claim? If the foundation is a bubble, how can the ſuperſtructure ſtand?—Whether his Lordſhip, by ſuch a ſpecious pretence of *ſerving* the intereſts of true religion, intended ſecretly to *undermine* it, I will not preſume to ſay. But this I may venture to declare, that his ſcheme is very ſhrewdly calculated to compaſs ſuch an end. Grant what his Lordſhip aſks; and what all the enemies of Chriſtianity wiſh, will undoubtedly follow.

Farther, Madam,—ſuch a diſtinction is contrary to the expreſs declaration of the *New Teſtament*; which poſitively aſſerts, that ALL *ſcripture is given by inſpiration*

* Page 96.

† That *this* is no *aggravated* imputation, every attentive reader of his Lordſhip's letters will eaſily perceive; and I believe, it will appear too plainly from the paſſages to be produced in the ſequel of this epiſtle.

ration of GOD *.—Our bleſſed LORD, who was very well qualified to *diſcern* truth, and equally zealous to *maintain* it, makes no ſuch difference. He ſays in general, *Search the ſcriptures* †; the *whole* collection of ſacred writings.—*Whatſoever things*, adds St *Paul*, not ſome particular paſſages only, but *WHATSOEVER THINGS were writen aforetime, were written for our learning* ‡; and muſt therefore have been under ſuch a divine ſuperintendency, as ſecured them from all poſſibility of error. Otherwiſe, they might be written, not for our *learning*, but for our *deception*.—So that St *Paul*'s direction is as contrary to Lord *Bolingbroke*'s diſtinction, as the eaſt is oppoſite to the weſt. We may as ſoon bring thoſe two points of the hemiſphere together, as reconcile his Lordſhip's *refinements* with the apoſtle's *religion*.

I believe it will be equally difficult to render his Lordſhip *conſiſtent* with himſelf. His *conceſſion* overthrows his *diſtinction*. Admitting the doctrinal parts of the ſcripture to be true, the veracity of the hiſtorical is, by *neceſſary conſequence*, and beyond all contradiction, eſtabliſhed. They are *indiſſolubly* connected: they mutually bear on, and mutually ſuſtain each other; and muſt ſtand or fall *together*. They are like an *arch* moſt exactly finiſhed; not a ſtone of which can be taken away, without diſconcerting the whole ſtructure; and like an arch firmly founded, as well as correctly finiſhed, the more they are *preſſed*, the *ſtronger* they will appear.

My Lord ſays indeed, That CHRIST came not to "conſecrate all the written traditions of the *Jews* ‖." He *ſays* it, but where or how does he *prove* it?—By written traditions of the *Jews*, I ſuppoſe we are to underſtand all the *Hebrew ſcriptures*. The drift of the

* 2 Tim. iii. 16. † John v. 39. ‡ Rom. xv. 4.
‖ Page 94.

the diſcourſe leads us to this ſenſe. Now, it is apparent, that our Saviour has *actually* conſecrated, has ſet the ſeal of authenticity and infallibility to *the law of* Moſes, to *the* pſalms, and to the *prophets* *. By appealing to them as *deciſive*, and by allowing them to be *predictive*, he has acknowledged them to be divinely inſpired; to be unqueſtionably true. And a very little acquaintance with *Jewiſh* antiquities will inform us, that, in theſe *three* partitions, *the whole* body of the *Hebrew* ſcriptures is comprehended?—What then becomes of his Lordſhip's aſſertion? or to whoſe diſcredit does it tend; that of the *Jewiſh* ſcriptures, or that of his *own* knowledge?

I muſt deſire your Lordſhip to take notice of the *expreſſion* in this paſſage. It is ſomewhat ſingular, and deſerves a particular regard. *Written traditions* is the phraſe. Every one knows that we explode, and very juſtly, thoſe *ſuperſtitious* whimſies of the *Jews*, which paſs under the denomination of traditions. Yet my Lord thinks proper, to call the hiſtories of the *Old Teſtament* by this *diſreputable* name; only he admits one difference, that whereas the former were tranſmitted by ſtrength of *memory*, the latter are committed to *writing*.—But is this an honeſt repreſentation? is this free from all *malignant* diſguiſe?

Let us put the matter to the following trial. The word *legend*, when applied to any *modern* ſtory, raiſes the ſame contemptible and abſurd idea, as the word *tradition* excites, when applied to any *Jewiſh* notion. Would my Lord, or would his friends think, that due honour or common juſtice was done to his *ſketch of the hiſtory and ſtate of* Europe, if it ſhould be ſtyled, in our public papers, Lord *Bolingbroke's written legends*?—The impropriety and the malevolence of ſuch a title would be undeniable and odious: Who then can vindicate the propriety of his Lordſhip's language, or clear

* Luke xxiv. 44.

clear it from being a moſt injurious miſrepreſentation of the ſacred records? which, however ſome of the facts might come down, in a traditionary channel, to the writers, by paſſing through *their* hands, receive the ſtamp of undoubted certainty; and are no longer *traditions*, but *oracles*.

I wiſh this had been the *only* inſtance of artifice and impoſition uſed in the letters under examination. Why are ſo many idle tales, and ſcandalous ſtories, raked together, and expoſed to view *? Why? but to put a cheat upon the inattentive reader, and depreciate † the dignity of the divine word? depretiate it, much in the ſame manner, as its moſt illuſtrious object and author was formerly diſhonoured; not only by the *falſe accuſations*, with which he was charged; but alſo by the *infamous company*, with whom he was numbered.—Did my Lord imagine, that theſe tales were really believed, even by the warmeſt advocates for holy writ? No: he muſt know in his conſcience, that they never were received by the generality of divines;

* See pages 85, 86, 88,—102,—108, 109.

† I would by no means indulge a petulant or cenſorious humour. Yet I cannot forbear thinking, that the ſcriptures are too often depreciated in his Lordſhip's performance; ſometimes by *ſneer*; ſometimes by *cavil*; and ſometimes even by *languid* approbation, or a *counterfeit* ſort of praiſe. Such as, —"*If* the foundations of Chriſtianity have been laid in truth," page 123.—"Paſſages which *ſeem* favourable to the doctrine of "the Trinity." Page 98.—Tho' I ſhould be loath to reject *any* teſtimony in favour of Chriſtianity; ſtill more loath to give up ſo *eminent* a name as Lord *B*———*e* to the Deiſtical party; yet I cannot prevail upon myſelf to acknowledge, that we are much, if at all obliged to him, for theſe poor, jejune, cold compliments. Such a teſtimony, and ſuch compliments, are juſt as ſerviceable to the momentous cauſe, as *a broken tooth* is ſerviceable to the eater, or *a foot out of joint* to the walker. Prov. xxv. 19. They are, in truth, mere δωρα αδωρα—or as Mr *Pope* more ſtrongly expreſſes the ſentiment,

They *damn with faint praiſe*.

vines; neither are mentioned by authors of diſcernment, unleſs it be to *confute* and *reject* them.—However, be they credited or not, it was apprehended, they might ſerve a purpoſe. But whether it be the purpoſe of integrity, impartiality, and truth, I leave to the determination of others.

Still it is urged, That theſe ſcriptures are "full of "additions, interpolations, and tranſpoſitions *."—That they are *full* of additions, is more eaſily aſſerted than evinced. I can find but *one* inſtance ſpecified by his Lordſhip. Which is the account "of the death "and ſepulchre of *Moſes*, with a ſort of funeral pa-"negyric †," recorded in the laſt chapter of *Deuteronomy*. Here it is taken for granted, that we are reduced to a terrible dilemma,—either to own, that this paragraph was written by *Moſes himſelf;* and then we may expect to hear of impoſſibility and abſurdity;—or elſe, that it is all *ſuppoſitious;* and then the ſcriptures muſt have paſſed through tampering fingers, and ſuffered adulteration?—But ſuppoſe this ſmall appendix was made by *Joſhua;* a man, whoſe mind was illuminated, and his hand guided, by the Spirit of the Moſt High? Does *ſuch* an addition deſerve to be branded with an *ignominious*, or even brought into diſeſteem by a *ſuſpicious* character?—Or, what if ſome other prophet, whoſe name is unknown, ſuperadded this valuable anecdote? Is the concealment of the penman's name ſufficient to impeach the genuineneſs, or invalidate the authority, of the paſſage? eſpecially, ſince it has been approved by other *inſpired* writers, and received the *Imprimatur* of the Holy Ghoſt?—I know not *who* is the printer of his Lordſhip's two volumes; yet, though ignorant of this circumſtance, for other *very ſatisfactory* reaſons, I have no doubt but they are the genuine productions of his pen.

May

* Page 95, 96. † Page 102.

My Lord would have done well to consider,—whether it was a probable or a practicable thing, to *interpolate* a set of books, which were studied with so much accuracy, and kept with so much vigilance; the *number* of whose verses, especially in the *Pentateuch*, was computed; and the *arrangement* of the very letters known. Whether, after the coming of Christ, the jealous eye which the *Jews* and Christians had on each other, was not an unsurmountable bar against any innovations or material alterations?—As for *transpositions*, they are used by the most approved historians. When used with judgment, they redound to the reputation of the writer, and increase the pleasure of the reader. And would his Lordship make *that* a disparagement of the sacred narrative, which is a recommendation of any ordinary composition?

But my Lord imagines, that he has found out a substantial reason for the aforementioned distinction;—has detected such *improprieties* in the sacred *narrative*, "as contradict all our notions of order and of "justice *." He produces, by way of *specimen*, the case of *Noah* denouncing a curse upon *Canaan*.—This, it seems, is the *capital* absurdity; this the *glaring* error; which, he concludes, is sufficient to uncanonize the histories of the *Old Testament*, and degrade their writers from the class of inspiration.—This, therefore, if your Ladyship pleases, we will *examine* a little more particularly.

The charge in general is thus expressed, "One is "tempted to think, that the patriarch was still "drunk; and that no man in his senses could hold "such language, or pass such a sentence."—Was I at leisure to criticise upon words, I should be tempted to observe, that the diction "no man could *hold* such "language," may be *French*, but is scarcely *English*. However,

* Page 110.

However, from the expreſſion I paſs to the ſentiment. —This, for *candour* and *ſolidity*, is much like the reflection of the *Jews*, on the memorable day of *Pentecoſt*. When the apoſtles addreſſed the inhabitants of various countries, each in his own native tongue; ſome of their hearers aſcribed this *miraculous* ability—to what? we are amazed, when we read,—to the *intoxicating* power of wine *. Strange! that exceſſive drinking, which incapacitates other people for talking *common* ſenſe, ſhould enable the diſciples of CHRIST to ſpeak *all kinds* of languages! — Is it not equally ſtrange, that a drunken diſorder ſhould enable the patriarch to deliver prophecies, and foretel *future* events! which (as I hope to prove) was the real import of the ſpeech.

Perhaps, this curſe may ſeem to be the effect, if not of diſorderly indulgence, yet of *intemperate paſſion*. And how incompatible is this with the character of a preacher of righteouſneſs? Surely *Noah* ſhould not have been ſo forward to *call for* the thunderbolts of vengeance. Any benevolent man, much more a pious progenitor, would rather have *deprecated* the blow.—I wonder, his Lordſhip did not ſtart this objection; which would have been much more plauſible, and much leſs ſhocking. To this, in caſe it had been ſtarted, we might reply,—That *Noah* acted as the oracle of GOD. This, and many other ſuch paſſages, which ſeem to be *imprecations*, are really *predictions*. Holy men ſpoke, as they were influenced by the Spirit; and uttered, not the ſuggeſtions of their own minds, but the will of almighty GOD.—Which inclines me to think, it might be no leſs proper, and much more ſuitable to the prophetic ſtyle, if we tranſlated ſuch paſſages, as *indicatives*, rather than *imperatives*; making them declaratory of what is decreed in the cabinet of heaven, and will as certainly take place,

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* Acts ii. 13.

as if it already exiſted. Curſed *is*; rather than *be*, *Canaan*. Bleſſed of the LORD *is*, inſtead of *be*, his land, *Deut.* xxxiii. 13. Thus *Iſaiah*, foretelling the incarnation of that wonderful and adorable perſon, whom he ſtyles *the mighty GOD*, ſays, To us a a child *is* born * ; ſo *calling the things that are not, as though they were.*—Such a manner of ſpeaking would remove from this particular paſſage, all that ſounds *harſh*, or ſeems *uncharitable ;* and would, in the general, impart an *unequalled majeſty* † to the language of ſcripture.

It was GOD then, and not man, from whom this avenging ſentence came. And GOD, to ſhew his utter deteſtation of all iniquity, to manifeſt his ſingular delight in all virtue, frequently takes occaſion to denounce vengeance, or promiſe happineſs, when ſome notorious evil is commited, or ſome laudable good performed. And was there not a moſt notorious evil committed here ?—*Charity*, ſays the apoſtle, *covereth all things* ‡ ; draws a veil over the various infirmities of every *common* neighbour. But this man (man ſhall I ſay ? rather monſter of ingratitude) ſees the ſhame of a *father*,—an *aged* ‖ father,—a *pious* father ; and inſtead of concealing, *when he cometh forth, he telleth it.*—*Fools* they are, abandoned profligates, that *make a mock at ſin.* What name then can

* Iſ. ix. 6.

† *Bleſſed be*, is what any holy perſon might ſay, and comprehends no more than a *ſupplicatory* benediction. *Bleſſed is*, ſuits only the mouth of a prophet, and implies an *authoritative* bleſſing.

‡ 1 Cor. xiii. 7. πάντα στέγει. This is one article in the fineſt diſplay of *ſocial* virtue that ever was exhibited to the world ; and ſhould, I think, be tranſlated (not *beareth*, but) *covereth* or *concealeth all things.* The natural import of the word juſtifies, and the context evidently requires this ſenſe. Otherwiſe, the firſt and laſt clauſes of the verſe will co-incide in their meaning, or rather make an unmeaning tautology.

‖ Lev. xix. 32.

can be bad enough for a prophane and unnatural wretch, who makes ſport with a parent's folly, a parent's ſinfulneſs, a parent's miſery?—Surely this was a moſt flagrant violation of filial reverence, filial love, and filial duty *. Which not only implied ſo many *particular* offences, each attended with its *reſpective* guilt, but indicated the offender to be deſtitute of *all* piety. For, to argue in the apoſtle's ſtrain, how could this man venerate a father in heaven, whom he had not ſeen; if he was ſo irreverent to a father on earth, whom he had ſeen?

But ſuppoſing the turpitude and immorality of the action to be very enormous, and ſuch as deſerved ſome ſignal vengeance; the vengeance, it is objected, was miſapplied. "For *Ham* alone offended: *Canaan* was "innocent,"—My Lord is not ſure that *Canaan* was innocent, though he aſſerts it pretty confidently. The contrary notion has obtained among the *Jews*. They apprehend, that *Canaan* was firſt in the tranſgreſſion, and, inſtead of being reproved, was imitated by his father. Biſhop *Patrick*, Mr *Poole*, and other eminent

 commentators,

* The turpitude and immorality of this offence will appear in blacker colours, if we conſider the *very peculiar* reverence, which, in thoſe days of primitive ſimplicity, was paid to *any* aged perſon, much more to an aged parent.

Credebant hoc grande nefas, et morte piandum
Si juvenis vetulo non aſſurrexerat, et ſi
Barbato cuicunque puer. Juven. Satyr. XIII.

We may ſee, from that awful threatening, Prov. xxx. 17. with what extreme deteſtation the moſt holy GOD reſents ſuch an unnatural behaviour. *The eye that MOCKETH AT HIS FATHER, and deſpiſeth to obey his mother, the ravens of the valley ſhall pick it out, and the young eagle ſhall eat it.* Nay, it ſhould ſeem from this text, as though all nature was ready to teſtify its abhorrence of ſuch a crime; and, rather than it ſhould eſcape condign puniſhment, the moſt inſenſible animals would riſe up to execute vengeance.

commentators think this to be no improbable opinion.

If his Lordſhip was unacquainted with the *Hebrew*, he will ſcarcely be thought qualified to pronounce ſo peremptorily concerning a caſe related in that language. If he was acquainted with the *original*, he acts ſomewhat unfairly in ſaying, "This notion is not "only without, but againſt the expreſs authority of "the text *." For he muſt know, that it receives ſome countenance even from the text itſelf. I would by no means offend your Ladyſhip's eyes, with any rugged figures, or uncouth quotations. But you may venture to believe me, when I aſſure you, that the moſt exact tranſlation of ver. 24. is, Noah *knew what his ſon had done to him, the* or *that little one* †. *Ham* could not ſo properly be ſtyled *the little one;* ſince he was the middlemoſt, and is always placed in that order; *Shem*, *Ham*, *Japheth*. But the deſcription agrees perfectly well with *Canaan*, the grandſon of *Noah;* and it was cuſtomary among the *Jews*, to call the grandchildren, the *ſons* of their grandfather. ‡.

Canaan, it is added, "was alone curſed."—The *words* would run ſmoother, if tranſpoſed in this manner, *Canaan* alone was curſed. As for the *fact*, that wants ſome better confirmation than my Lord's bare aſſertion. To me it is evident, that *Ham* was not exempted from the curſe. What? If it did not fall upon him in perſon? yet to be puniſhed in his offſpring muſt be very *affecting*, and no leſs *afflicting*.

But

* Page 111.

† Though it would have been very unpolite, to quote *Hebrew* in writing to a *Lady;* it may be judged proper, perhaps be thought neceſſary, now the letter is made public, to produce the original expreſſion; that where an argument is derived from the *preciſe* ſignification of the phraſe, the *learned* reader may examine and determine for himſelf.—הקטן בנו Gen. ix. 24. The word קטן is uſed of *Benjamin*, *Jacob*'s youngeſt ſon, and tranſlated *a little one*, Gen. xliv. 20.

‡ Gen. xxix. 5. 1 Chron. i. 17.

But hold; my Lord has foreſtalled us in this reply. Inſtead of waiting for it, or acquieſcing in it; he plays it upon us, with an air of triumph. "Will it be ſaid, "—this has been ſaid,—that *Ham* was puniſhed in "his poſterity *:"—It has; and, with his Lordſhip's leave, I will venture to ſay it again. Nor ſhould I, in caſe Lord *Bolingbroke* was alive, have went farther than *his own* breaſt, for a *proof* of my aſſertion. Would *he*, with all his exalted ideas of *liberty*, have thought it no puniſhment on himſelf, provided he had been the father of children, to have heard them doomed to a ſtate of *ſlavery;* nay, to be, as he very rightly explains the ſacred phraſe, "the vileſt and worſt of "ſlaves?"—eſpecially if, like *Ham*, he was appointed, in the courſe of providence, to be the father of ſeveral *nations?*—and if the doom had been pronounced by a perſon, of whoſe *prophetic* ſpirit there was ſo inconteſtible an evidence, as the univerſal inundation was of *Noah*'s.

Since my Lord has no more communication with us or our affairs, I appeal to any, to every *parental* heart.—Let nature,—fond, compaſſionate, yearning nature ſpeak,—whether the infliction of ſuch a penalty on the ſon, (perhaps a favourite ſon, like *Joſeph*,) the ſon's ſons, and the lateſt poſterity,—whether *this* be not *properly* a puniſhment of the father? whether the father muſt not feel by anticipation, what his wretched progeny muſt endure in reality!—Nature once ſpoke to ſuch a query, and this was her language; *O my ſon* Abſalom! *my ſon*, *my ſon* Abſalom! *would GOD I had died for thee! O* Abſalom, *my ſon*, *my ſon* †! Did hiſtory ever record, or poetry ever invent, ſo melancholy a moan? It breathes the very ſoul of wo; and *exemplifies* the ſentiment, which his Lordſhip would *explode*.

David, it is plain, was puniſhed in the calamitous exit of this young prince; in the diſaſters ſuſtained, and

* Page 111. † 2 Sam. xviii. 33.

and the diſorders committed, by his other children *. *Adam* thought himſelf puniſhed in the ruin which he brought upon the human race; and laments it, in the moſt pathetic terms, as the ſevereſt diſtreſs attending his apoſtaſy †.—One wiſer than *Adam*, one greater than *David*, whoſe judgment is always according to truth, is evidently of the ſame opinion; and, for that reaſon, has formed the ſanction of a moſt ſacred commandment, upon this very principle; *He will viſit the iniquities of the fathers upon the children, unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate him.*—What GOD has ſo expreſsly threatened, he has actually done; not on this only, but on various other emergencies. Thus *Eſau* ſuffered in his deſcendents ‡; *Jehu* in his family ‖; and *Hezekiah* in his children §? who all, like the *Canaanites*, were children of their fathers diſobedience ⁎; inheritors of their ſin, as well as of their name.—But this would anticipate the reply to another objection.

Where is the equity of curſing a people, that are yet *unborn?* Does not this "contradict all our no-

"tions

* 2 Sam. xii. 10.

† See the whole of *Adam*'s diſconſolate complaint; part of which are the following lines;

——————*Yet well, if here would end*
The miſery; I deſerv'd it, and would bear
My own deſervings: but this will not ſerve.
All that I eat, or drink, or ſhall beget,
Is propagated curſe. O voice! once heard
Delightfully, Increaſe and multiply;
Now death to hear!

Parad. Loſt, book X. l. 725.

‡ Compare *Gen.* xxvii. 40. with 2 Sam. viii. 14. *Thou ſhalt ſerve thy brother;* here is the ſentence. *All they of* Edom *became* David's *ſervants;* here its execution.

‖ Hoſ. i. 4. § Iſ. xxxix. 6, 7.

⁎ *Morum quoque filii.* Juv. Sat. XIII.

" tions of order and of juſtice?"—It may be contrary to *our* notions, or at leaſt it would be unjuſtifiable in *our* practice; but is quite otherwiſe with regard to the all-ſeeing GOD. Is it not agreeable to the ſtricteſt rules of juſtice, for a magiſtrate, when he has heard the witneſſes, ſummed up the evidence, and found the priſoner guilty;—is it not agreeable to the ſtricteſt rules of juſtice, to paſs ſentence upon *ſuch* a criminal? The queſtion can admit of no doubt. Yet it is equally certain, that *this* was the very caſe with reference to the ſupreme Judge, and thoſe ſinners the *Canaanites*.—They practiſed the groſſeſt and moſt inhuman idolatries; they abandoned themſelves to the moſt horrid immoralities; ſuch as violated nature; confounded all order; and ſuch as it would be ſhocking even to mention *.—Now all theſe provoking crimes were *preſent* to the view of HIM, by whoſe inſpiration *Noah* ſpake. He ſaw them with the ſame circumſtantial exactneſs, as if they had been already perpetrated.—Let us take theſe very important particulars into conſideration, the *exceſſive wickedneſs* of thoſe nations, and the *all-foreſeeing diſcernment* of JEHOVAH; and then who will dare to *inſinuate*, that the everlaſting Sovereign acted unjuſtly? that he launched the lightnings of his indignation, in an arbitrary manner, or upon an innocent people?—Who will be ſo precipitate, as to affirm with my Lord, that " no other writer but a " *Jew*, could impute to the œconomy of divine Pro- " vidence the accompliſhment of ſuch a prediction; " nor make the Supreme Being the executor of ſuch " a curſe †?"

The former of thoſe circumſtances will appear in a proper light, what his Lordſhip calls, " cruelties com- " mitted by *Joſhua* in the conqueſt of the *Canaan-* " *ites*." It will make them appear to be acts of *righteous vengeance;* a much-needed and moſt deſirable extirpation

* Lev. xviii. 4. † Pag. 110.

tirpation of a *peſtilent* people; altogether as ſerviceable to the public, as it was formerly, to deſtroy the *wolves* from our iſland; or as it is, at preſent, to deliver over ſome *flagitious* malefactors to the ſentence of the law.—Yet the execution of this vengeance was delayed, year after year, century after century. The ſeed of *Abraham*, for ſeveral ages, were not permitted to enter upon the poſſeſſion of their deſtined inheritance; becauſe *the iniquity of the Amorites*, which was the cauſe of their extermination, *was not yet full* *. —Does it then beſpeak the man of *integrity*, to repreſent thoſe proceedings of *Joſhua*, under the *abhorred* image of cruelties; which were acts of a juſtice, exemplary, ſalutary, and greatly to be *revered?* Is it becoming an *honeſt* inquirer after truth, to ſuggeſt, without the leaſt ſhadow of proof, a *ſelfiſh* and *malignant* reaſon, for the deſtruction of the *Canaanites;* when a reaſon, the moſt *equitable* in its nature, the moſt *beneficial* in its conſequences, is expreſsly and repeatedly aſſigned by the ſacred hiſtorian †?—This I refer to your Ladyſhip's deciſion; who, I am ſure, will not err on the uncharitable extreme; yet, I believe, will find

* Gen. xv. 16.

† Gen. xv. 16. Deut. ix. 5. *FOR THE WICKEDNESS of thoſe nations, the LORD thy GOD doth drive them out from before thee.*—See alſo Lev. xviii. 25. Where the ſacred writer deſcribes their execrable and unparalleled vileneſs, by one of the ſtrongeſt and boldeſt figures imaginable. So vile they were, that the very country loathed them; was weary to bear them; and acted like a diſguſted naufeating ſtomach, when oppreſſed with foul and offenſive food: *The land itſelf vomiteth out her inhabitants.*—Let no *ſqueamiſh* critic betray his *falſe* taſte, and *worſe* temper, by carping at the expreſſion. But let all be aſtoniſhed at the outrageous impiety of the *Canaanites;* and adore the vindictive arm of JEHOVAH; and acknowledge, that ſuch horrible miſcreants were (not for ſome reaſons of ſtate, as my Lord is pleaſed to inſinuate, deemed only, but were) *really*, and on the moſt *ſubſtantial* principles of juſtice, an *accurſed race*. Page 112.

find it difficult, with all your *good-nature*, to acquit the author of these letters from the charge of *disingenuity*.

May I not add,—this way of *foretelling*, yet *respiting* the punishment, is gracious both in itself, and in its consequences?—*In itself;* because a reprieve is always reckoned an alleviation of the sentence, even though it be not the forerunner of a pardon:—*In its consequences;* because it afforded large space for recollection, and should have awakened the offenders to a sense of their guilt. It should have incited them to use all possible diligence to avert the doom, both by a personal reformation, and by educating their families religiously. Why did they not act as king *Ahab* acted *, and argue as the men of *Nineveh* argued †, in a following age, but on a like occasion?—Instead of this, instead of betaking themselves to consideration and prayer, to repentance and amendment, they ran to the *same*, to *greater* excess of ungodliness.

So that these people, being evidently inheritors of their father's sinful nature, and obstinately persisting in their father's sinful ways, were *most deservedly* partakers of his curse. And though GOD is that uncontrollable Sovereign, *who giveth not*, is under no obligation to give, *account of any of his matters* ‡; though he often has reasons for his dispensations absolutely unsearchable by any mortal; yet here he is clearly vindicated even before men,—even before the sinners themselves. They themselves must confess the justice of their doom; and own, that *GOD hath done rightcously*, *but they have done wickedly;* that GOD has shewed all long-suffering, and given full warning before the blow fell. Whereas they, notwithstanding this forbearance and this admonition, have continued incorrigible; and without any other change, but that of becoming more consummately vile.

Agreeably

* 1 Kings xxi. 27, 29. † Jonah iii. 9 ‡ Job xxxiii. 13.

Agreeably to all this, and conformably to the moſt acknowledged rules of equity, it is declared by the ſacred hiſtorian, that the *Amorites*, the deſcendents of *Canaan*, ſuffered not till they had filled up the meaſure of *their* iniquities *; *their own*, as well as their father's. —All which, I ſhould imagine, is ſufficient, not only to *juſtify* the counſels, but to *glorify* the judgments, of the great JEHOVAH, ſufficient alſo to *ſatisfy* any inquirer, who is (as my Lord very handſomely expreſſes himſelf) "candid but not implicit, willing "to be informed yet curious to examine."

My Lord's *curioſity to examine*, ſhall I ſay? or his reſolution to be diſſatisfied? proceeds ſtill farther. Accordingly he adds, "Who does not ſee, that the "curſe and the puniſhment, in this caſe, fell on *Ca-* "*naan* and his poſterity, excluſively of the reſt of the "poſterity of *Ham* †?"—The particle *of*, ſo frequently repeated in a ſingle ſentence, can hardly be admired as an *elegance* ‡ of ſpeech. But, taking *no more* notice of ſuch little blemiſhes, I ſhall conſider the weight, not the poliſh, of his Lordſhip's arguments.—As for *this* argument, I verily think, when laid in the balance of impartiality and candour, it will *be found wanting*. For, admitting the objection in its full ſcope, what follows? Why, that the righteous GOD pardoned *ſome* criminals, when he might juſtly puniſh *all*. And

* Gen. xv. 16. † Page 110, 112.

‡ This, and one or two preceeding remarks of the ſame nature, are ſcarcely worth our notice. Neither ſhould I have mentioned them, had they not *fell in my way*; and were it not to put a *query* upon the popular notion, that his Lordſhip's ſtyle is ſo correct, elegant, and noble, as to be a *ſtandard* for *fine writing*. It cannot, in my apprehenſion, juſtly claim this honour. If others think differently, I leave them to enjoy their opinion; and ſhall not (though it would be eaſy enough to multiply proofs) add a word more upon the ſubject.

And if it ſhould have pleaſed the ſupreme Judge to *repeal* the ſentence, and *remit* the penalty, with regard to ſome offenders, who ſhall arraign his conduct? who ſhall cenſure his providence? To exerciſe mercy is his great prerogative; an act not of debt, but of royal bounty, which he exerciſes, *when* and to *whom* it ſeemeth good in his ſight: *I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy* *, is his high and holy reſolve.

I might therefore anſwer his Lordſhip's queſtion, by aſking another; which I might propoſe, in the *plain* but *ſolemn* words of our LORD JESUS CHRIST: "If *theſe* are ſpared, while *thoſe* are puniſhed, *what* "*is that to thee? Is thine eye evil, becauſe GOD is* "*good?*"—But I ſhall rather reply to the objection, by denying the fact. The puniſhment was not confined to *Canaan* and his poſterity. It reached the other deſcendents of *Ham*; *Miſraim* himſelf, the father of the *Egyptians*, (as will be ſhewn in a proper place,) not excepted. *Canaan*, 'tis true, is *particularly mentioned*.—Becauſe he was (as from this very circumſtance is extremely probable) an *accomplice* † with *Ham*, in the breach of filial duty.—Becauſe this branch of the family was more than ordinarily corrupt, nay, *beyond meaſure* vitious.—Becauſe the *Canaanites* were, in the *firſt* place, and in the *fulleſt* manner, to feel the effects of the curſe.—And *Moſes*, being charged with a commiſſion to execute the vengeance on this people *only*, had no occaſion to concern himſelf with any *other*. Juſt as the ſheriff of a county, demanding the body

* Rom. ix. 16.

† This is rendered ſtill more credible, by that *particularity* of ſtyle, which the ſcripture uſes in ſpeaking of *Ham*. *Ham the father of Canaan*, Gen. ix. 18, 22. Why of *Canaan* ſo eſpecially? Had he no other children, no other ſons!—Several other.—But this diſtinction ſeems to be a brand of *infamy* ſet upon the offender; and intimates, that he who was father of *Canaan* by blood, was his partner, was his brother in iniquity.

body of a condemned malefactor, produces the dead-warrant for *his* execution; without intermeddling, or thinking himself under any necessity to intermeddle, with the other prisoners in the jail.—This leads me to a new, and, if I judge right, by far the most important inquiry; namely, whether the curse was *executed*, as well as *pronounced*?

As I hasten to the proof of this particular, my Lord embarrasses and retards me with a fresh obstacle. He himself has thought proper to inform us, "why the "posterity of *Canaan* was to be *deemed* an accursed "race." But he lets the world know, "it is not so "easy to account, why the posterity of the right-"teous *Shem*, that great example of filial reverence, "became slaves to another branch of the family of "*Ham*, during more than fourscore years *."—I am by no means convinced, that the point proposed enters into the *merits* of our cause. Should the reasons for this dispensation remain an impenetrable secret; yet, if we clear up the *propriety*, and demonstrate the *equity*, of the curse denounced, we compass our main end, and confute the grand censure. However, as the question is presented, it shall be considered: and though his Lordship should affect to *sneer*, I chuse rather, in imitation of those noble writers, whose dignity I would assert, to be *serious*.

Why were the *Israelites* sojourners in *Egypt*?—A reason occurs, that is worthy of a *gracious* GOD, and greatly for the *public* good: That they might carry thither the knowledge of the everlasting JEHOVAH, and of the promised MESSIAH; of the only *acceptable* method of worship, and the only *effectual* way of salvation.—As *Egypt* was the parent of literature, and the fountain-head of science; as men of letters and curiosity came, from all parts of the world, to complete

* Page 112.

complete their ſtudies at *Egypt;* if theſe heavenly doctrines were received THERE, they would be more likely, ſome ſtreams of them at leaſt, to be transfuſed into *all* climes, and improve every nation. So that the people of the LORD, the only depoſitaries of *divine* philoſophy, were ſettled in this land of general reſort, with much the ſame wiſe and beneficient views, as the ableſt profeſſors of learning are placed at our famous univerſities.

But why were they *ſlaves* in *Egypt?*—This might be to *try* them, and to *humble* them; to ſhew them what was in their heart, and to *purge* out their droſs. We are taught in ſcripture, that the Almighty chaſtens whom he loves, and ſcourges the men whom he receiveth to himſelf. Even the *Heathen* claſſics, my Lord's favourite authors, have frequently remarked, That adverſity is a ſchool, in which both private perſons and public ſocieties have learned the moſt heroic virtues.—Beſides, this might be intended to animate and inſpirit the *Iſraelites* for their invaſion of *Canaan*. They were, in the general, a ſupine and grovelling * ſet of people. Had they been ſettled in a ſtate tolerably eaſy, or in territories that were but moderately commodious, they might never have aſpired after the land flowing with milk and honey; never have made any reſolute efforts to poſſeſs their deſtined inheritance. But, being *driven* by the *laſh*, and *inſtigated* by the *goad*, of pungent galling ſlavery, they were even conſtrained to burſt the chains, and puſh their way to liberty and *Canaan*. Their inſupportable ſlavery was ſomewhat like *bending* the bow, and *ſtraining* the ſtring, in order to *launch* the arrow.—Farther, GOD almighty

* Let none imagine, that the *wiſdom* of GOD is impeached, by ſelecting to himſelf a people of this character. His *clemency*, his *forbearance*, and all thoſe *benign* perfections, which are ſo neceſſary for the ſalvation of ſinners, are hereby diſplayed with peculiar advantage, and to our unſpeakable conſolation.

almighty assures *Abraham*, that his seed, though enslaved for a while, should *come out* of their bondage *with great substance* *; with the silver, the gold, the jewels, and the choicest treasures of *Egypt*. So that, when labouring for their *taskmasters*, they were, in fact, labouring for *themselves*. The wealth of the oppressors was laid up for the oppressed. And the season of their affliction in the enemies country, was like the rigorous *cold* of winter; which, far from obstructing, only makes preparation, for the *blossoms* of spring, and the *fruits* of autumn.—These considerations might have solved the difficulty to his Lordship, as a *politician*.

Other reasons are suggested by our *divines;* which, if my Lord had thought it worth his while to regard, might have given better satisfaction, and yielded more edification. They would have reminded the *Right Honourable* querist,—that such a gloomy aspect of the *Jewish* affairs, made way for the brightest manifestation of GOD's glorious attributes; of his power, in rescuing them from their tyrannical rulers; of his *faithfulness*, in fulfilling his promise made to their fathers; of his *goodness*, in supporting and conducting them; *keeping them*, amidst the most formidable dangers, *as the apple of an eye;* and *bearing them*, even through the most insuperable difficulties, *as on eagle's wings* †. This also opened a most *conspicuous* theatre, for that amazing *train* of *miracles*, which have been, in all ages, as serviceable to the faith of *Christians*, as they

* Gen. xv. 14.

† See Deut. xxxii. 10, 11. These, I think, are most delightful and *inimitably-delicate* representations. Let the pious critic try, if he can conceive those *tender* offices, that *unintermitted* vigilance, and assiduity of *protecting cherishing* cares, which are expressed in these fine images. For my part, I own myself incapable of describing them; but most earnestly wish, that every reader as well as myself may learn them in that best of schools, the school of *experience*.

they were formerly conducive to the welfare of the *Jews*.—They would farther have informed his Lordſhip, and have confirmed their opinion by apoſtolical authority, that the whole of this moſt wonderful tranſaction was *typical* of *ſpiritual* things; was a ſeries of *living* leſſons, delivered, according to the eaſtern method of conveying knowledge, in figures and emblems. The *Egyptian* bondage was a reſemblance of our *natural* condition; which is a ſtate of the moſt abject ſlavery to ſin.—The arbitrary and injurious impoſitions of the *taſkmaſters* ſhadow forth, though but faintly, the tyranny of *unruly* appetites, and *imperious* paſſions.—That barbarous edict for the deſtruction of all the infant-males, fitly enough repreſents the genuine tendency of *carnal* and *corrupt* affections; which deſtroy our true comfort, ſubvert our nobleſt intereſts, are as death to the joys and to the hopes of our ſouls. —Their *deliverance* from that miſerable ſtate, was an expreſſive ſign of our redemption from the guilt and the dominion of ſin *. Both which the LORD JESUS accompliſhes; the one by *price*, the other by *power*: not by ſlaying the firſt-born, but by ſhedding his own blood; not by ſoftening rocks into a ſtream, but taking away the heart of ſtone; not by turning the current of *Jordan* backward, but by turning

* The divine writer to the *Hebrews*, makes the land of *Canaan*, typical of *a better country*, *even of an heavenly*, Heb. xi. 16. xii. 22. According to the ſame author, the *peaceful ſettlement* of the *Iſraelites* in *Canaan*, ſuggeſted to their thoughts, and pointed out to their faith, that everlaſting *reſt* which remaineth for the people of GOD, Heb. iii. 4, 5, &c. Since the *terminus ad quem* (as the ſchoolmen ſpeak) is evidently myſtical and allegorical; may we not conclude, that the *terminus a quo* is myſtical and allegorical likewiſe? Then it will follow, upon the cleareſt principles of analogy, that the *intermediate* ſteps and advances are of the ſame nature; ſignificative of *refined* and *ſpiritual* things, under *earthly* and *ſenſible* images.—This, if I miſtake not, is put beyond all doubt, 1 Cor. x. 1, 2. &c.

ing all our desires into a new channel.—The many troubles and oppositions they met with in the wilderness, exhibit a lively picture of the *molestations* that attend, and the *temptations* that assault, the Christian. Trials await us. Snares are around us. Through many conflicts, and *much tribulation we must enter into the kingdom of heaven*. Only let us beware, lest, like the ungrateful *Israelites*, we forget the GOD of our salvation, and *fall after the same example of unbelief*.—The *cloud*, that was spread over them by day, to intercept the glare, and screen them from the heat of the sun; the fire, that shone before them in the night, to chear the nocturnal darkness, and lead them through the trackless desert; were not these very amiable and exact emblems of our Saviour's merits, and of his holy *word?* The former of which are *refreshing* to the guilty conscience, as the veil of a thick interposing cloud is welcome to a traveller in sultry climes. The latter is a light to our feet, and a *lantern* to our paths to guide us in the way everlasting.—Their *passage* through *Jordan*, the priests that bare the ark of the covenant going before them *, and standing in the midst of the river, till all the congregation were passed over; this very emphatically prefigured our great High Priest, *bearing* our *sins*, *fulfilling* the *law* in our stead, *abolishing death*, and making it a *safe* as well as short transition to life eternal.

You will excuse me, Madam, for *expatiating* upon these topics. They are so inviting, so pleasing, so comfortable, that I can hardly persuade myself to leave them.—If any other parts of the epistle, thro' a kind of unhappy necessity almost inseparable from controversy, should resemble the *asperity* of the *thorn*; this, I hope, will bear some affinity to the *fragrance* of the *rose*. For which cause it is, that I chuse only to touch, and but lightly touch, the one; while I would

* See Josh. iii. 13, 14, &c.

would open the other into a full expanſion, and a rich effuſion.—Let me add one more obſervation on this head, and I have done. It is apprehended, by very judicious perſons, that the puniſhment of the *Egyptians*, and their total overthrow, may be a preſage of the *miſery* and *ruin*, which will ſooner or later fall upon individuals and nations, that *reject* the glorious goſpel, and *vilify* its ſacred repoſitory THE BIBLE.

If the reaſons I have offered, are neither tireſome, nor unſatisfactory to your Ladyſhip, I ſhall proceed the more chearfully to ſhew, that the curſe was *executed*, as well as pronounced.—Had it been the *ſenſeleſs* extravagance of a man intoxicated with liquor, or the *raſh* imprecation of a man heated with reſentment, or the *deſigning* interpolation of ſome crafty ſtateſman, would the *holy*, the *gracious*, the *true* GOD have ſet the broad ſeal of heaven to it? would HE, who overrules all events, have *ſuffered* it to ſucceed,—have *commanded* it to ſucceed,—nay, have *brought it himſelf to paſs*, by a mighty hand, and ſtretched-out arm? Impoſſible to conceive!—If therefore it was really brought to paſs, and with a ſurpriſing punctuality, and not by any competency of human means, but by the moſt evident diſplay of divine power, this will be ſuch a proof of its *credebility*, its *reaſonableneſs*, and *equity*, as no one, who thinks reverently of the Deity, can deny.

Canaan was to be a ſervant to *Shem*.—This was accompliſhed, when the *Iſraelites*, the deſcendents of *Shem*, conquered the land of *Canaan*, ſlew thirty of its kings *, and took poſſeſſion of their cities; when the *Gibeonites* particularly, who compoſed one of their principal ſtates †, became *hewers of wood, and drawers of water, to the congregation* ‡; or, in other words, the moſt menial ſervants to the loweſt of the people.

By

* Joſh. xii. i. 24. † Joſh. x. 2. ‡ Joſh. ix. 27.

By what inſtruments was this extraordinary revolution wrought?—by one of the fineſt armies in the eaſt or weſt? marſhalled by the braveſt officers, and headed by the moſt experienced general? No; but by a raw, undiſciplined, enſlaved people; who were deſtitute of military ſkill, and without any perſonal qualifications, or warlike apparatus for ſo difficult, ſo dangerous an enterprize.

Through what obſtacles was it begun, carried on, and completed?—In ſpite of the attempts of one potent monarch to detain them in ſervitude; in ſpite of the reſolution of ſeveral combined kings, to diſpute with them every inch of ground to the laſt drop of their blood. A deep river, and an arm of the ſea muſt be croſſed, by ſix hundred thouſand men, with their wives, their children, their cattle; and without any veſſel to tranſport them, or any bridge to tranſmit them.—They muſt dwell, forty years, in a deſolate, inhoſpitable, barren wilderneſs; which was infeſted by ravenous beaſts, and fiery flying ſerpents; in which there was neither water, nor corn, nor any ſort of accommodation for abode, or ſuſtenance for life.

How were all the difficulties *ſurmounted?*—Not by the arm of fleſh; this was utterly impracticable; but by the moſt aſtoniſhing interpoſition of Omnipotence. —The *Egyptian* tyrant is humbled, and brought to their terms, by the infliction of ten tremendous plagues. —The waters of the river are dried up, and the waves of the great deep are divided, ſo as to yield them a ſafe unobſtructed * paſſage.—A ſtream guſhes even from the hard rock; and *gives them drink, as it had been out of the great depths.*—Prodigious quantities of *manna*

* *He led them through the deep*, encumbered as they were with their kneading-troughs, and ſurrounded with frightful billows, *as an horſe in the wilderneſs;* with as much *eaſe* and *ſpirit*, as ſome courageous courſer makes his way through (מדבר) a plain, open, champaign country. Iſ. lxiii. 13.

manna * descend, with every morning-dew; and supply them, not from the garner, but from heaven, with their daily bread.—Vast flights of *quails* arrive, with every setting sun; and drop, like a bird shot through the wing †, *in the midst of their camp, and round about their habitations*.—The walls of an impregnable city fall to the ground, at the blast of rams horns ‡. The sun stands still in the midst of heaven, at the voice of a man ‖. All the hosts of the nations, with all their weapons of war, are *driven asunder as the foam upon the waters*, and *cut off as the tops of the ears of corn*.

And is it probable, can it be possible, that every element, and all nature, should not only *concur*, but

... *alter*

* We are not to think, that the *manna* took its *name* from any resemblance to the *medicinal drug*, which, among us, is so commonly known, and so frequently used. It is rather derived from the *abrupt* expression of the *Israelites*, on their first beholding this wonderful food. They cried out with amazement, מן הוא *Man Hu? What is this?* Which exclamation, denoting their own surprise, and the unexpected as well as unparalleled nature of the gift, became both a *memorial* of the one, and a *denomination* of the other.

† This is described with the utmost vigour and beauty, in that sublime piece of sacred poetry, Psal. lxxviii. 27, 28 *He rained flesh upon them as dust, and winged* (*here* lies a peculiar emphasis, and *thus* should the original עוף כנף be translated, *winged*) *fowl like as the sand of the sea*. Yet, though they were furnished with wings, and therefore might easily escape, they neglected to make use of their natural powers. They fell round the *Israelitish* tents, like the rain from heaven, *which returneth not*, and like the sand of the shore, *which cannot be numbered*.

This whole psalm is a manifest proof of the observation, which was made in a preceding paragraph,—That the *historical* and *doctrinal* passages of scripture are like the deed and its counter-part, in their substance *exactly corresponding*; and, like the links of the same chain, in their connection *absolutely inseparable*.

‡ Josh. vi. ‖ Josh. x. 12, 13.

alter their *eſtabliſhed* courſe, *depart* from the *fundamental* laws of their creation, on purpoſe to ratify, what was bolted out by the patriarch in a *drunken revel*, or foiſted into the text by ſome *Hebrew Machiavelian?*

Canaan was to be ſervant alſo to *Japheth*.—Purſuant to this prediction, did not the *Greeks* and *Romans*, who derive their lineage from *Japheth*, make themſelves maſters of the reſidue of *Canaan? Tyre* built by the *Sidonians*, and *Thebes* * by *Cadmus*, were both deſtroyed by *Alexander* the *Grecian*. *Carthage*, founded by *Dido*, was, after a long ſucceſſion of loſſes, and a vaſt effuſion of blood, demoliſhed by *Scipio* the *Roman*. Which loſſes made *Hannibal*, a child of *Canaan*, cry out, with a mixture of aſtoniſhment and deſpondency, *Agnoſco fortunam Carthaginis!* i. e. † "I ſee plainly "the hand of Deſtiny working, I ſee *that oracular doom* "haſting to its accompliſhment, in theſe dreadful ca-"lamities ſuſtained by *Carthage!*"

If theſe facts are true, which have the unanimous conſent

* "*Alexander* laid ſiege to this city, took it by ſtorm, and "entirely deſtroyed it; ſlaying ninety thouſand of the inhabi-"tants, and ſelling the reſt, to the number of thirty thouſand "more, into ſlavery." *Prideaux's Connect.* vol. I. p. 479.

† Vid. *Liv.* lib. xxvii. *ad finem.*—A writer of the firſt repute, for elegant taſte, and penetrating judgment, thinks it *more than probable*, that *Hannibal*, in this diſpirited and hopeleſs acknowledgment, refers to the prophecy under conſideration: which will juſtify my *free*, though, I hope, not erroneous tranſlation of the paſſage.—What the ſame author adds, is ſo very ingenious, and ſo appoſite to my purpoſe, that I will beg leave to tranſcribe it.

"That the *Romans* were no ſtrangers to the ſame divine "oracle, appears from *Virgil*:"

Progenium ſed enim Trojano a ſanguine duci
Audierat, Tyrias olim quæ verteret arces.
Hinc populum late regem, belloque ſuperbum,
Venturum excidio Lybiæ. Sic volvere Parcas.

"In

consent of historians for their support, what can we say of his Lordship's assertion, "that *Canaan* was "servant to *Shem*, though not to *Japheth* * ?" This, I am apprehensive, will be found as *false*, as the following objection is *weak*. In which he urges, that "*Canaan* was servant to one of his uncles, not to his "brethren †."—Such a cavil, (for certainly it deserves no better name,) discovers an *utter ignorance* of the *Hebrew* phraseology; or else, a *strange inattention* to it; I would not say, an *egregious misrepresentation* of it. I thought *every one* had known, till Lord *Bolingbroke* undeceived me, that nothing is more common in the oriental

"In translating which, if we only name the *ancestors*, in-"stead of the *descendents*, the original prophecy glares upon "us."

From Japheth's *loins deriv'd, a race she knew*
Design'd the strength of Canaan *to subdue:*
Wide-spread their empire, destin'd to succeed
And waste the sons of Ham:—So fate decreed!

See Mr *Ridley*'s sermons at Lady *Moyer*'s lecture, p. 252.

* The words at large are, "*Canaan* became servant of ser-"vants to *Shem*, though not to *Japheth*, *when the Israelites* "*conquered Palestine.*" Pag. 111.—I must beg leave to inquire, *why* the last clause is added? Is it to prove, that when the *Israelites* subdued the *Canaanites*, the descendents of *Ham* were not, by *this* victory, made servants to *Japheth*'s offspring? If so, my Lord encounters a phantom of his own raising, and confutes what no man asserts.—Is it to insinuate, that, because the race of *Canaan* were not, at *this time*, made vassals to the posterity of *Japheth*, therefore they *never* were; and, of consequence, the prophecy was *eluded?* This seems to be the design of the sentence. Abstracted from this design, I see not what end it can answer. But this is to draw, from premises that are true, a conclusion that is false; and is just as good logic, as the libertine's argument is sound divinity, "Vengeance "*is not yet*, therefore it *never will be*, executed." See 2 Pet. iii. 4.

† Pag. 111.

oriental idiom, than to expreſs any *relatives* of the male line, by the denomination of *brethren* *.

I hope, your Ladyſhip will not think *this*, or any of my other remarks, *indecently* free. In the preſence of the moſt high GOD, all men are upon a level. When the honour of his divine word or glorious attributes is concerned, we are to *know no man after the fleſh* †; pay no deferential regard to the diſtinctions of birth, or elevations of character. In *theſe* liſts the privileges of peerage ceaſe. And I ſhould reckon myſelf the moſt abject of creatures, if through reſpect of perſons I could *palliate* or *ſecrete* the truth, when the ever venerable oracles of inſpiration are treated with contempt. A violation of decency this! by whatever hand it is offered, or from whatever quarter it comes, incomparably more flagrant than *ſcandalum magnatum*.

Pardon, Madam, this digreſſion, and permit me farther to obſerve,— That the progeny of *Ham*, in another line, are, to this very day, the ſlaves of the whole trading world. The *negroes* I mean; whoſe deſcent is from that unhappy man. And what is their country but a *market* of *ſlavery*? Are not their perſons bought ‡ and ſold as the meaneſt commodities? are they not debaſed to the moſt *ſordid*, and haraſſed with the moſt *toilſome* drudgery? made, in the ſtrictly-literal ſenſe of the phraſe, *ſervants of ſervants*?

I have not forgotten what I promiſed to make appear, with relation to the *Egyptians*; neither ſhall I overlook

* See Gen. xiii. 8.; where *Abraham* and *Lot*, though uncle and nephew, are called *brethren*.—Gen. xxiv. 48.; where *Bethuel* another of *Abraham*'s nephews, is ſtyled his *brother*.—Gen. xvi. 12. xxiv. 27.

† 2 Cor. v. 16.

‡ No leſs than *thirty thouſand*, I have been informed, are, every year, bought for ſlaves by the *Engliſh only*.

overlook what his Lordſhip has remonſtrated from the ſame quarter. "The deſcendents of *Miſraim*," He ſays, "another of the ſons of *Ham*, were the *Egyp-* "*tians*: and they were ſo far from being ſervants of "ſervants to their couſins the *Shemites*, that theſe "were ſervants of ſervants to them *."—For a ſeaſon they were. But this ſervitude was calculated for the good of their community, and redounded to the glory of their GOD. It terminated in ſuch a ſignal deliverance, as brought honour and opulence to themſelves, confuſion and ruin to their enemies. Does it then follow, from this *temporary* ſuperiority of the *Egyptians*, which ended in ſo *diſaſtrous* a manner, that they were *excepted* in the denunciation of the curſe, or favoured with an act of *indemnity*?

What ſays the ſupreme Arbitrator? *The nation whom they ſerve will I judge* †: I myſelf will puniſh; not by any human inſtruments, but by my own immediate hand. Accordingly, they were viſited with the moſt dreadful and deſtructive plagues. In the laſt of which, the firſt-born, the flower of their kingdom, were cut off; and at length, their king, and his whole army, periſhed in the *Red ſea*. Does my Lord make no account of theſe moſt terrible and unexampled judgments?

Beſides, what was the condition of this people in the following ages? If we conſult *Ezekiel*, he will declare it, as clearly by the ſpirit of prophecy ‡, as if he had lived on the ſpot, and ſeen the face of affairs. "And it came to paſs, in the eleventh year, in the firſt "month, in the ſeventh day of the month, that the word "of the LORD came unto me, ſaying, Son of man, I "have broken the arm of Pharaoh king of Egypt; and "lo, it ſhall not be bound up to be healed, to put a "roller to bind it, to make it ſtrong to hold the ſword. "—I

* Page 112. † Gen. xv. 14.
‡ Ezek. xxx. 20, 21, 23. xxix. 15. xxx. 13.

" —I will ſcatter the Egyptians among the nations, " and will diſperſe them through the countries.—E- " gypt ſhall be the baſeſt of kingdoms, neither ſhall it " exalt itſelf any more among the nations.—And there " ſhall be no more a prince of the land of Egypt." —Is not all this confirmed by *ancient* hiſtory, and by the *preſent* ſtate of *Africa?* From the one we learn, that the *Egyptians* were ſubject, firſt to the *Perſians*, next to the *Grecians*, then to the *Romans;* afterwards to the *Arabs*. And from the other it appears, that they *now* wear the *Turkiſh* yoke; are governed, not by a prince of their own, but by the *Grand Seignor* and his *baſhaws*.

Nay, let any perſon look round upon *all* the countries peopled by the progeny of *Ham;* and I am much miſtaken, if he does not find them, what the Pſalmiſt deſcribes, *dark places of the earth, and full of the habitations of cruelty* *; the dens of *rapine*, and the dungeons of *ignorance;* where *ſlavery* drags the chain, and *tyranny* lifts the ſcourge.—Inſomuch, that we need not ſcruple to ſay, in the emphatical words of *Joſhua*, *Not one thing has failed of all the good*, or the evil *things*, *which the LORD ſpake* by the mouth of *Noah*, *concerning* each of his ſons reſpectively. *All are come to paſs*, *not one thing has failed* †.

This calls upon me to clear up another part of the prediction;—the bleſſing pronounced upon *Shem*, and the enlargement promiſed to *Japheth:* which will afford a new argument, to maintain the authenticity of the paſſage, and aſſert its divine inſpiration.

I ſaid the bleſſing *pronounced upon*. Becauſe I would not tranſlate the words, *Bleſſed be the LORD GOD of* Shem; but, *Bleſſed of the LORD GOD is* Shem. This will put a *ſtriking contraſt* between the doom of the irreligious ſcoffer, and the reward of filial piety: this is what we *naturally expect* from a GOD, who

* Pſal. lxxiv. 20. † Joſh. xxiii. 14.

who is not unrighteous to forget his people, and their labours of love: this ſenſe the original language will very commodiouſly *bear* *, and the event ſeems to *require*. For how manifeſtly, how eminently, was this benedictive ſentence fulfilled! ſince, in the poſterity of *Shem*, the *church* of GOD was eſtabliſhed, and his true worſhip propagated. From him, the *Redeemer* of mankind, that *bleſſing of bleſſings*, according to the fleſh ſprung.

The great *enlargement* of *Japheth*'s territories, is no leſs certain, and no leſs remarkable. He had, for his poſſeſſion, the iſles of the ſea weſtward, and the fine extenſive countries near them; *Spain*, *Italy*, *Greece*, *Aſia the Leſs*, all *Europe*, and the vaſt regions towards the north; which anciently the *Scythians*, now the *Tartars* inhabit; from whom the *Americans*, the people of the new world, ſeem to be derived.—By *Japheth*'s *dwelling in the tents of* Shem, is meant the converſion of the *European* Gentiles to the goſpel of CHRIST: who, through a long progreſſion of years, were *aliens from the commonwealth of* Iſrael, *ſtrangers to the covenants of promiſe*, *having no hope* of eternal life, *and without* any ſaving knowledge of *GOD in the world* †: but were, in due time, perſuaded to embrace the true faith; were made (as the apoſtle elegantly ſpeaks, and in a ſtrain perfectly correſponding with the language of our prophecy) *fellow-citizens with the ſaints*, *and of the houſehold of GOD* ‡. An event, altogether as undeniable, as it is important, delightful, and glorious.

Upon the whole, I cannot but think that his Lordſhip has planted his battery, and played his artillery, if

* Gen. ix. 26. ברוך יהוה אלהי שם—words of the very ſame import, in the very ſame conſtruction, are *thus* rendered by our tranſlators, Deut. xxxiii. 13. and will hardly admit of any other interpretation; יהוה אריו מבורכת *Bleſſed OF the LORD*, &c.

† Eph. ii. 12. ‡ Eph. ii. 19.

if not like an unskilful, at least like an unsuccessful engineer. He has *planted his battery* against a place, too well fortified to admit of any impression, and that must infallibly triumph over every assault. He has so *played his artillery*, that it recoils upon himself, and crushes his own design.—And this, I apprehend, will always be the issue, when men even of the *finest genius* and most *improved capacities* presume to attack the scriptures of eternal truth.

This very passage, instead of *depretiating*, unspeakably *ennobles*, the divine writings. It shews, that they bear the stamp—of that *all-over-ruling* power, which purposes, and none shall disannul it;—of that *all comprehending* knowledge, which discerns events, long, long before they come into existence.—And let any unprejudised reader judge, what degree of esteem those books may fairly challenge, whose least considerable, or, in his Lordship's opinion, *most obnoxious* parts, have such a *depth*, and such a *dignity* of wisdom! such as will be admired and revered, so long as *historic* truth has any credit, or *commercial* intelligence any being.

Shall I trespass upon your Ladyship's patience a little farther?—The penmen of the *Old Testament* carry all the marks of the most *disinterested* and *undesigning* sincerity. They record the *failings* of their favourite and most illustrious heroes, without concealing the *punishment* inflicted on such miscarriages.—The uniform *tendency* of their narratives and observations is, to promote a religion the most *pure*, the most *benevolent*, the most *elevated* imaginable; as remote from all selfish aims, and every low art of collusion, as the heavens are higher than the earth.—They were men singularly *qualified* for their work; being either *eye-witnesses* of the facts they relate, or else *contemporaries* with the persons they describe, or still more remarkably distinguished, by their ability to work *miracles*, and their insight into *futurity*.—As to the facts related, some of them

them had anniverſary *ſolemnities*, on which they were commemorated: ſome of them had ſignificant *ceremonies*, by which they were repreſented. They were *publicly read* in the ſynagogues, and *univerſally known* through the nation. It was a duty of religion, to *talk* of them by day, to *meditate* on them by night, and diligently to *inſtruct* the children in them. And were not theſe circumſtances a ſecurity, an *inviolable* ſecurity againſt any attempt to corrupt, to innovate, or alter? —So that their writings appear with every character, both *internal* and *external*, of genuine truth; and with the moſt unqueſtionable *credentials*, from the GOD of power, and GOD of wiſdom *. Conſequently, they have a credibility of *their own;* ſufficient both to claim, and to ſupport, the faith of an ancient *Jew;* ſuch as muſt *command* the aſſent of every *rational* and *honeſt* inquirer, even before the Chriſtian diſpenſation took place.

If my Lord had duly adverted to theſe conſiderations, ſurely he would have expunged that *bold* and *raſh* aſſertion, "Without Chriſtianity we have no obligation to believe the *Old Teſtament* †."—Surely he would never have left behind him, that *unwarrantable* and *injurious* inſinuation, that the *Hebrew* original deſerves no better credit, than the fabulous ſtory ‡ of the *Septuagint*

* Another very extraordinary peculiarity in theſe writings, and, to me at leaſt, an undoubted proof, that their authors were divinely inſpired, is, their *perfect agreement* and *entire conſiſtency* throughout.—Though they were compoſed by *different* men, placed in very *different* ſtations of life, and flouriſhing in very *diſtant* ages of the world; yet they are as conſonant and harmonious, as if they had all been penned by the *ſame* hand.—Any thing equal to this, I never ſaw; never heard of; and I believe, the moſt inveterate or moſt ſagacious adverſaries of the *Old Teſtament* will not attempt to produce a parallel.

† Page 94.

‡ The *ſtory* is told, page 86.—The *inſinuation* is made, in a prolix, confuſed, and obſcure paragraph, page 87.

Septuagint translation;—nor have found any reason to "protest, that he knew of no rule to go by *," (in settling the degree of assent due to the several parts of the *Old Testament*,) but the *fanciful distinction* which has already been examined.—He would rather have found reason to adopt and subscribe *Agur*'s confession of faith; a man, who was famous in his own, who will be famous in every generation, and for this, among other most judicious maxims, *EVERY word of GOD is pure* †. 'Tis *all* gold, *fine* gold, without *any* the *least* alloy.

For my own part, I freely acknowledge to your Ladyship, that I value the sacred history (even exclusive of its connection with the transcendent glories of CHRIST, and the unspeakable benefits of redemption) on the very same principles, which incline our connoisseurs to value those celebrated *antiquities* they call medals *singular;* because it is supposed, there is but *one* of the sort extant.—Considering the *private* interests, and *personal* attachments, which are so apt to bias the human mind; considering the *imperfect* information, and *ignorance* of causes, to which all other writers are unavoidably subject; I cannot but conclude, that the sacred history is, in point of strict, precise, universal veracity, SINGULAR. There is none other besides this, no, not one in the whole world, that is free from *all* the false colourings of prejudice; clouded with *no* mixture of uncertainty; most *minutely* true; and to be depended on, in *every* particular. The sacred history is not only seated on the *throne* of *truth*,

* Page 100.

† Prov. xxx. 5. St *Peter* bears much the same testimony to the *whole* order of scriptural writings. With regard to their *use*, he calls them *milk;* because nothing is so well adapted to *nourish* our faith and our holiness. With regard to their *quality*, he styles them ἀδολον, *sincere*, unadulterated, pure; without any mixture of falsehood, or any tincture of folly. 1 Pet. ii. 2.

truth, but, in *these* respects, possesses it *without a rival*.

Lord *Bolingbroke* is fond of *Davila* *; because *Davila* discovers the *hidden springs* of action, and traces up almost every enterprize to its source †.—Is this so valuable a qualification in the *Italian*? How then should we admire the *inspired* historians? who disclose to us, not the secret measures of a court, but the *unsearchable counsels* of heaven; not the little motives that actuate the politician, but the *deep designs* of the universal Sovereign; and all this, not from precarious surmise, but with the *fullest assurance*. An excellency! to which no other narrative on earth can lay any claim.

The scriptures throw light upon the most memorable transactions, that have passed in the *Heathen* world, and are recorded by the *classic authors*.—When the *Assyrian* monarch subdues kingdoms, and ravages nations; we are apt to think, he is only gratifying his insatiable ambition. But the scripture assures us, that he was *the staff in JEHOVAH's hand, and the rod of his indignation* ‡; an instrument made use of by the King of kings, to execute his righteous vengeance.—When *Cyrus* is habituated to all the noble exercises, educated in all the fine accomplishments, that form the gallant prince, and constitute the complete general; *Xenophon* sees nothing more than the exertion of human policy. But *Isaiah* beholds the all-superintending arm of the LORD, girding || this hero, and preparing

* He wrote a history of the civil wars of *France*, in fifteen books; containing all that was remarkable, from the death of *Henry* II. in 1559, to the peace of *Vervins* in 1598. It was originally written in *Italian*, and translated into *French* by *J. Bodoin*. *Collier's Hist. Dict.*

† Page 167. ‡ Is. x. 5.

|| Is. xlv. 5. *I have girded thee, though thou hast not known me.* *Xenophon's* Κυρου Παιδεια, tho' written with quite a different view, is a very fine, and perhaps the very best *comment* on *Isaiah's* beautiful and expressive phrase, חגרתיך

preparing him for the deliverance of his people.—So that the ſcripture-hiſtory is *itſelf* the grandeſt and moſt uſeful; while its *intercurrent* obſervations are a key to open the moſt celebrated affairs, which give weight and eſtimation to other annals.

The grandeſt and moſt uſeful.—This will appear to be more than a bare aſſertion, if we recollect, that here is a diſplay of that great *Meſſiah*, who is *the hope of Iſrael* *, and *the deſire of all nations* †; a diſplay of him, in his myſterious incarnation, his wonderful perſon, and all the gracious, the benign majeſty of his mediatorial offices. From the original promiſe (made to our firſt parents) through all its progreſſive evolutions, till he ariſes in the *New Teſtament*, *as the only-begotten of the Father* ‡, with a luſtre and dignity ſuitable to ſo divine a perſonage.—Which is an event, of ſuch incomparable *condeſcenſion*, *magnificence*, and *grace*, that all the prophets bear witneſs to it ‖, and the *very angels deſire to look into it* ⊥.

How then muſt your Ladyſhip be ſurpriſed, to ſee Lord *Bolingbroke* undertaking to aſſign the *principal* ſcope of the *Moſaic* ⊣ hiſtory, (the former part of it at leaſt,) and not *enlarging*, not *dwelling upon*, no, nor ſo much as *mentioning*, the *Redeemer*: That all-glorious, all-important REDEEMER, who is the ſum and ſubſtance of the whole ſcriptures; the *Alpha* and *Omega* in all the revelations of GOD:—of whom *Moſes* ⊣ wrote, and whoſe day *Abraham* ſaw ⊣⊣;—whoſe righteouſneſs was preached by *Noah* =, and his final advent foretold by *Enoch* **:—whoſe merits, apprehended

* Acts xxviii. 20. † Hag. ii. 7. ‡ John i. 14.
‖ Acts x. 43. ⊥ 1 Pet. i. 12. ⊣ Pag. 109.
⊣ John v. 46. ⊣⊣ John viii. 56.
= 2 Pet. ii. 5. It can hardly be doubted, but *Noah* preached the very ſame righteouſneſs, of which he himſelf was an heir: and *that*, we are aſſured, was the righteouſneſs of faith, Heb. xi. 7.
** Jude, ver. 14.

hended by faith, were the recommendation of *Abel*'s ſacrifice *; and the conſolation of *Adam* †, under the loſs of immortality, and expulſion from paradiſe: from whom many, if not all, the *antediluvian* patriarchs borrow their honours, and ſtand upon everlaſting record, chiefly as being in the number of *his* progenitors.—This *capital* omiſſion is (to uſe his Lordſhip's own language) "a manifeſt abuſe of *ſacred* hiſtory, "and quite inexcuſable in a writer, who knew, or "ſhould have known ‡," that, in its *moſt early* as well as in its *later* periods, it invariably teſtifies of CHRIST ||.

Thus to undertake, and *thus* to execute, is as if ſome *pretender* to *anatomy* ſhould engage to explain the nature of animal motion, and ſay not a word concerning the nerves, the muſcles, the heart; or, as if ſome *ſmatter* in *geography* ſhould offer to exhibit a complete map of our country, and leave entirely out of his plan, the cities, the towns, and the rivers.—Yet this is not the *only* incident, on which my Lord, however critical in profane literature, diſcovers himſelf to have been very *remiſs* in the ſtudy, at leaſt very *ſuperficial* in the knowledge, of his Bible.

From which hint I would take occaſion to intreat, and with the moſt affectionate earneſtneſs, all that are inclined to diſpute againſt this divine book, firſt to make themſelves *thoroughly acquainted* with it.—And would they once ſet about the momentous work, with a candid, upright, and impartial mind; free from the *jaundice* of prejudices; not *blinded* with the fumes of ſelf-conceit; nor *intoxicated* with the cup of vitious pleaſure: if they would *thus* examine the inſpired volumes, they would ſoon perceive ſuch a *lovely conſtellation* of truth, of wiſdom, and of grace, ſhining forth from every page, as muſt turn their *diſeſteem* into *admiration*, and their *averſion* into *delight*.

But

* Heb. xi. 4. † Gen. iii. 15. ‡ Pag. 178. || John v. 39.

But if they bring with them a fondneſs for fame, a haughty ſelf-ſufficiency of ſpirit, or an ignoble attachment to ſenſual gratifications; if they are determined to cheriſh, and will on no conſideration divorce, theſe *ſeducers* of the *heart*, and *perverters* of the *judgment*; we cannot wonder, that the ſcriptures ſhould appear to *them*, with much the ſame aſpect, as the miraculous cloud appeared to the *Egyptians*; which threw darkneſs on their paths, and ſhed horror on their ſouls, even while it gave light to the ſteps, and alacrity to the hopes, of the *Iſraelites* *.—In this caſe, we may aſſign a *reaſon* for their *oppoſition*, from the unhappy circumſtances recorded of *Iſhmael* †: Their hand, their tongue, their pen, is againſt the word of GOD; *becauſe* the word of GOD is againſt them, their tempers, and their ways.

In the ſacred narrations, we behold *the arm of the LORD revealed*.—Other hiſtorians only *gueſs* at the interpoſition of an *avenging*, or *propitious* GOD. And though conjectures of this kind occur but very rarely in their works; they are frequently cenſured, as a *preſumptuous* intruſion upon the *arcana* of heaven. —But the penmen of ſcripture, with *unerring* certainty declare, *This is the LORD's doing*; a ſtroke from the ſword of his juſtice ‡, or a reward from the riches of his goodneſs ‖.

Here

* Exod. xiv. 20. *It was a cloud and darkneſs to them, but it gave light by night to theſe.*

† Gen. xvi. 12. *His hand will be againſt every man, and every man's hand againſt him.*

‡ See 2 Chron. x. 15.—xv. 6.—xxv. 20.—xxviii. 5, 6.—xxix. 8, 9.

‖ See 2 Chron. xii. 7.—xiii. 15, 16, 18.—xiv. 6, 12.—xxvi. 5.—xxvii. 6.—I refer to the *Chronicles*, rather than to the other parts of ſacred hiſtory, in order to create a *higher eſteem* for theſe excellent memoirs. Many people, I believe, are *contentedly* ignorant of the *Chronicles*; becauſe ſome of the firſt chapters

Here we perceive, as in the brighteſt mirror, what practices he *favours*, and what methods he *oppoſes*; what courſes are attended with his *bleſſing*, and what behaviour provokes his *diſpleaſure*.—Theſe records ſet before us the moſt *ſtriking exemplifications*, both of the divine threatenings, and of the divine promiſes; demonſtrating, from repeated experience, that the former are more than vain menaces; the latter are far from alluring fallacies. By which means, they are admirably well adapted, to inculcate thoſe fundamental leſſons of practical religion;—a continual *advertence* to GOD;—a believing *dependence* on GOD;—and an habitual expectation of *ſucceſs* in our ſchemes, not *merely* from any addreſs or induſtry of our own, but from the all-powerful *benediction* of GOD:—which are, of all other precepts, perhaps, the moſt ſalutary and beneficial to mankind.

My remarks would be immoderately prolix, were they to enumerate *all* the perfections of ſacred hiſtory. I ſhall content myſelf with wiſhing, that your Ladyſhip may eſteem, may reverence, may love the *whole* book of GOD,—*only* in proportion to its worth. Then, I am perſuaded, it will have your *higheſt* eſteem, your *profoundeſt* reverence, and moſt *devoted* love.

Before I conclude, give me leave, Madam, to make *one*

chapters conſiſt of *Hebrew* names, which are *forbidding*, and of genealogical tables, which are *uſeleſs* to the generality of readers.—But, notwithſtanding their unpromiſing introduction, they contain the moſt *memorable* and *momentous* occurrences. They are interſperſed with the moſt *weighty* and *edifying* remarks. They are worthy of our *repeated* peruſal, and will amply repay the moſt *careful* attention.—I would compare them to ſome noble *mine*, whoſe ſurface is barren, and ſeems to include nothing valuable. But, as you penetrate the ſoil, the treaſure opens. The deeper you go, the more riches you find. And, inſtead of regretting the little toil of application, you are only grieved, that you undertook the gainful ſearch no ſooner.

one requeſt : which I make, under a ſenſe of my various obligations to your Ladyſhip, with all the engaging acts of your condeſcenſion and generoſity, full in my view. It ought therefore to be, and it really is, *expreſſive* of the moſt *unfeigned* thankfulneſs for your favours, and of the *trueſt* zeal for your happineſs. It is this,—That you would carry on a *daily* intercourſe, and cultivate a holy, an *intimate* familiarity, with the inſpired writers, and their ineſtimable volumes.—Read them. Recollect them. Weigh them.—Contemplate them in their magnificent *whole*, in their beautiful *parts*, and their harmonious connections.

I ſhould be afraid to recommend, in this zealous manner, and to this aſſiduous peruſal, the *moſt correct* compoſitions, that ever proceeded from a *human* pen. But here I am under no apprehenſion of your exhauſting the mine, and complaining of *emptineſs;* under no apprehenſion, leſt the entertainment ſhould *flatten* upon your taſte, and create *diſguſt*. The more we ſearch thoſe ſtorehouſes of wiſdom, the better we underſtand thoſe oracles of truth, the more they will *approve* themſelves to our *judgment*, and become *dearer*, ſtill *dearer* to our *affections*.—The pages of ſcripture, like the productions of nature, will not only endure the teſt, but improve upon the trial. The application of the microſcope to the one, and a repeated meditation on the other, are ſure to diſplay *new* beauties, and preſent us with *higher* attractives.—Nay, the very attempts of an adverſary to *blacken* the ſcriptures, ſerve only to *increaſe* their *luſtre*. For my part, I never ſhould have ſeen the prediction of *Noah riſing*, with ſuch perſpicuity, propriety, and glory, to obſervation, had not Lord *Bolingbroke* made an effort to *overwhelm* it with objections, and *ſink* * it into diſcredit.

Above

* An alluſion to the *motto*, in the title-page,

Merſes profundo pulchrior evenit,

and expreſſive of its meaning.

Above all, may we bring to this beſt of ſtudies, an *humble mind:* a mind deeply ſenſible of its own *ignorance* and *weakneſs;* yet frequently and chearfully lifted up to GOD, for his enlightening and animating Spirit: that, by his bleſſed influences, our *underſtandings may be opened to underſtand the ſcriptures* *, and our *hearts opened to receive them* †: to underſtand them, in all the *fulneſs* of their heavenly meaning; to receive them, in all the *force* of their transforming power.—That, reading the *threatenings*, we may tremble ‡ at the awful word, and acknowledge ourſelves juſtly liable to thoſe terrible judgments; but at the ſame time believe, that *CHRIST has delivered us from the curſe of the law, being made a curſe for us* ‖:—That, reading the *promiſes*, we may confeſs ourſelves unworthy of an intereſt in ſuch unſpeakable bleſſings; yet reſt aſſured, that *all the promiſes of GOD are yea and amen in CHRIST JESUS* §; are our unqueſtionable portion, through his merits and atonement; and will certainly be fulfilled, through his interceſſion and faithfulneſs.—Reading the *precepts*, let us rejoice in the belief, that our Saviour, *obedient* unto death, has fulfilled

* Luke xxiv. 45.

† Acts xvi. 14.—Such is the *darkneſs*, ſuch the *depravity* of our minds, that they will not, they cannot, be made *wiſe unto ſalvation*, even from the ſcriptures themſelves, without the *powerful agency* of the bleſſed Spirit. Unleſs *his* influences *enlighten* our underſtandings; and *apply* the doctrines, when underſtood, to our hearts; we ſhall be, even with the word of *light* and *life* in our hands, ſomewhat like *blind Bartimeus*, ſitting amidſt the beams of day; or like the *withered arm*, with invaluable treaſures before it. This, I think, experience muſt *acknowledge;* this, I am very certain, the texts referred to, in concert with many others, *evince.*

‡ See Ezra x. 3.—2 Chron. xxxiv. 27.; where it might not be amiſs, to compare the temper of true *believers*, and the behaviour of an illuſtrious *king*, with the ſpirit that runs thro' his *Lordſhip*'s performance.

‖ Gal. iii. 13. § 2 Cor. i. 20.

led them *perfectly* for our justification; that our Saviour, *exalted* unto heaven, has engaged to *put his Spirit within us* for our sanctification; *causing us to walk in his statutes, and to keep his judgments, and do them* *. —Contemplating the various *examples*, may we use some of them, as *admonitory* sea-marks, to avoid the rocks of sin; use others, as a *conducting* clue, to guide our feet into the way of peace; use all, as so many *incitements*, to awaken our circumspection, or quicken our diligence, in *making our calling and election sure*.

Then we shall have *another proof*, that the original of these holy books is not from man, but from the LORD JEHOVAH: a proof, which some people may explode, as imaginary or enthusiastical, but is really of the *utmost solidity*, and of the *last importance*: which, though by no means independent on, much less exclusive of, other evidences, is, nevertheless, to each individual person, incomparably more valuable than any, or every other attestation. We shall HAVE THE WITNESS IN OURSELVES †. We shall experience, on our own souls, the happy energy of the *scriptures*. They will be the *instrument* of working such a *lively faith* in CHRIST, such an *ardent love* of GOD, such a *cordial benevolence* for our fellow-creatures ‡, as cannot fail to *exalt* our desires, *refine*

* Ezek. xxxvi. 27. † 1 John v. 10.

‡ This is what his Lordship means, or ought to mean, when he speaks of "the proper force of religion; that force "which subdues the mind, and awes the conscience by con-"viction." page 182. And I am well assured, whatever he may surmise to the contrary, that *this voucher* to the real inspiration of the scriptures, and divine original of Christianity, "*is not* wanting." Nay, I durst venture to engage, that it *never will be* wanting to any person, who seeks it with due attention and becoming diligence; and neither forgets nor neglects those necessary preparatives, prescribed by the great Master of the Christian school:—The one comprehend in this maxim, *If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it*

fine our affections, and *dignify* our tempers;—such as will administer *comfort* under affliction, and impart an *additional* relish to prosperity;—such as will teach us to order our conversation right, amidst all the snares, all the labyrinths of *time*; and gradually train us up for the pure bliss, and consummate enjoyments of *eternity*.

May THIS proof, Madam, be written on your *heart*,—written in *bright* and *indelible* characters,—written by the finger of the *living* GOD!—*Then*, I am assured, every attempt to stagger your belief, or withdraw your veneration from THE BIBLE, will be like an attempt to shatter the rock in pieces with a bubble, or to pierce the adamant with a feather.—This is not only the *sincere wish*, but, so long as religion and gratitude have any place in my breast, it will also be the *earnest prayer* of

Your LADYSHIP'S

much obliged,

April 22.
1752.

and most obedient

humble servant,

JAMES HERVEY.

it be of GOD. John vii. 17. The other delivered in the following direction, *If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of GOD, who giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not, and it shall be given him.* Jam. i. 5.

POST-

POSTSCRIPT.

I have taken no notice of his Lordſhip's animadverſions, relating to the genuineneſs of the *goſpel-hiſtory*: becauſe this would be entering upon a new field, which I leave *open* and *untouched*, for ſome more able defender of that invaluable depoſitum.—Not that I apprehend, there is any thing very formidable in the attack. But I think it would be ſerviceable, as I am perſuaded it is eaſy, to ſhew the *weakneſs* and *unreaſonableneſs* of thoſe arguments, which men of ſuperior abilities are obliged to take up with, when they liſt themſelves under the banner of ſcepticiſm or infidelity. —It would alſo be a piece of public juſtice, to inquire into the *ſincerity*, *probity*, and *conſiſtency* of thoſe writers; who, in ſome places, lay a mighty *ſtreſs* upon the authority of the *New Teſtament*, (page 94.) in others, endeavour to *ſap* the very foundation of its credibility, (page 177.)

CON-

CONSIDERATIONS

ON THE

PREVAILING CUSTOM

OF

VISITING ON SUNDAYS.

THE ſentiments here offered againſt the prevailing cuſtom of profaning the Sabbath, will probably be a ſatisfaction to every ſerious reader, and be productive of much good; eſpecially as it is in every body's power to reform one, and as then his own conduct will be a tacit reproof to his acquaintance, who may probably, through his example, be induced to weigh theſe proceedings attentively, and no longer follow a multitude to do evil.—It is certainly a matter of importance to inquire whether Sunday-viſits are juſtifiable upon the principles of ſcripture and of reaſon? as the conſcientious obſervation of the Sabbath has of late years been ſo much diſregarded; and as it is now become the principal day of viſiting among perſons of all ranks. The chief advocates for the continuance of ſuch a practice ſhould, methinks, defend it publicly, that their arguments may be properly examined, if (in their opinion) ſuch a cuſtom can admit of any rational defence. And thoſe who are ſufficiently convinced by what is here advanced, ſhould reſolve to diſcontinue

discontinue Sunday-visits themselves, and discountenance them in others, as far as they can consistent with decency and prudence.—That the number of such well-disposed persons may be daily increasing, is undoubtedly the hearty wish of every one who is sincerely desirous of promoting the glory of GOD, and the good of mankind.

Qu. *Whether it be right for* TRULY-SERIOUS *persons to visit on Sundays?*

THE persons here mentioned, are the *truly-serious*. As to *many* people, it matters not whether they are at home or abroad: GOD is not in all their thoughts; they have no concern for their eternal welfare; they therefore are, in every place, altogether and alike unprofitable.

But when we begin to discern the things that are excellent; when we sincerely desire to "obtain salvation, with eternal glory, by *JESUS CHRIST;*" *then*, whether it be proper to fall into the prevailing custom of visiting on *Sundays?* is the question.

Were our companions religious, and was our conversation edifying, I should make no scruple to give my voice in the affirmative. Every parlour would then be a little sanctuary; would echo back the exhortations, and second the designs of the pulpit; and we might truly say, *It is good for us to be here.*

But, alas! where do we find such company? when do we hear such conversation? The general conversation is all impertinence; not so much as seasoned with a spice of religion. *They talk of vanity every one with his neighbour*, Psal. xii. 2. For which reason, I cannot think it safe or expedient, allowable or innocent, HABITUALLY to visit on *Sundays*.

It is inconsistent with the best example. *I was in the*

the Spirit on the LORD's day, says St John. I was filled with the communications of the HOLY SPIRIT, giving me clear views of *CHRIST*, bright hopes of glory, and shedding abroad the love of GOD in my heart. But is this compatible with the idle, trifling, insignificant chat, which ingrosses our ordinary visits?

OBJECTION I. Will it be said, the apostle's was a *peculiar* case? I answer, it was a *peculiarly-happy* case. And will a prudent Christian relinquish the prospect of such unspeakable happiness, for the most empty and delusive amusement? But, I believe, it was *not peculiar* to the apostle; rather the common privilege of all believers; written as a pattern for their practice, and to be the plan of their expectations.

It is contrary to the divine prohibition. The negative law, relating to the Sabbath, is, "not doing thy "own ways, not finding thy own pleasure, not speak-"ing thy own words, *Is.* lviii. 13.—Not doing thy own "ways:" abstaining from secular business, and all worldly pursuits.—*Not finding thy own pleasure*; renouncing all those recreations and amusements, which may tend to gratify thy taste, not to glorify thy almighty LORD.—*Not speaking thy own words*; conversing on spiritual, sublime, and heavenly subjects; not on low, earthly, temporal matters, which, having no reference to the Creator's honour, are therefore called *thy own*. However, some people may act, or whatever they may think, this is the express and unalterable law established by the GOD of heaven. Whether it be possible to mingle in modish company, and obey this law, let those judge who are acquainted with the world.

It breaks the divine command. The positive-law relating to the Sabbath is, *Remember the Sabbath-day, to keep it holy*. REMEMBER, take *particular* notice of THIS injunction. It is a duty greatly to be re-

garded, and moſt conſcientiouſly to be obſerved. Upon the due obſervance of this, our diſpoſition and ability to obſerve the other precepts, in good meaſure, depends. *Keep it holy;* devote it to holy purpoſes; ſpend it in holy exerciſes; and not barely an hour or two; not barely the intervals of private and public devotion; but the day, the Sabbath-day, the whole day. Neither will the whole day be too long, if we make conſcience of diſcharging the ſeveral duties of religion, reading and meditation; prayer and praiſe; teaching our children, and inſtructing our domeſtics; examining our hearts, and taking heed to our ways. All theſe offices, if properly performed, will leave very little, rather no time for unneceſſary elopements. And ſhall we huddle over all theſe important offices, or totally neglect ſome of them, only to indulge ourſelves in the moſt unprofitable levities? at once doing an injury to our ſpiritual intereſts, and violating the divine precept.

I fear, it will be a kind of *crucifying afreſh our bleſſed Maſter*, Heb. vi. 6. This expreſſion we have often read, but think ourſelves free from the guilt implied in it, and indeed from the very likelihood of contracting it. But let us be reminded, that *we crucify our LORD afreſh*, when we give others occaſion to conclude, that we have very little eſteem for him, or gratitude to him; conſequently, that he has little or no excellency, for which we or others ſhould deſire him. Now, what elſe can the world conclude, when they ſee us giving into the vanities of a licentious mode, on that very day, which is ſacred to the commemoration of his reſurrection? "Surely," might the children of this world ſay, "if theſe Chriſtians "had any real reverence for their LORD, they "would ſhew it on *his own* day. They would either "be retired to contemplate and adore him, or elſe "come abroad to exalt and glorify him. But they "come abroad to be as frothy in their talk, and as

"trifling

" trifling in their temper, as forgetful of their SA-
" VIOUR, and as regardleſs of his honour, as the
" moſt arrant worldling among us all." To afford a handle for ſuch reflections, is to wound the RE-DEEMER in the houſe of his friends.

It will *grieve the HOLY SPIRIT*, Eph. iv. 30. Chriſtians believe, that he is infinitely wiſe, all-gracious, and ever bleſſed; that he dwells in their hearts, and is the ſource of all their holineſs and all their happineſs. Therefore we pray daily in our liturgy, *that the HOLY SPIRIT may not be taken from us*. On *Sunday*, we commemorate the deſcent of this divine gueſt; and are, in a particular manner, to implore his preſence, and cultivate his influences. But can this be done, by neglecting his expreſs prohibition, and breaking his poſitive command? by diſregarding the examples which he has ſet before us; and diſhonouring that SAVIOUR whom he delights to magnify? Beſides, dare any mortal preſume to ſay in his heart amidſt a circle of our polite viſitants, " I am
" now acting in a manner becoming my relation to
" the eternal SPIRIT. Theſe ſentiments and this
" diſcourſe are ſuitable to his dignity, wiſdom, and
" glory; a proper method of celebrating and honour-
" ing the day of his miraculous miſſion?"

Should any one aſk, " what is meant by *grieving the*
" *HOLY SPIRIT?*" It means offending his exalted Majeſty, and cauſing him to act as men commonly act, when they are grieved and diſpleaſed with any one; they withdraw from his company, and viſit him no more. When *Samuel* was grieved for *Saul's* miſbehaviour, it is written, " He came no more to
" ſee *Saul*." If the almighty COMFORTER be provoked to deal thus with our ſouls, alas! what a loſs muſt we ſuſtain! a loſs, unſpeakable, irreparable, eternal!

So that if this practice were not ſinful, it muſt be *exceedingly detrimental;* and that, not in one only, but

in various reſpects. Have we received ſpiritual good from the public ordinances? The admonition of heaven is, *We ought to give the more earneſt heed to the things which we have heard, leſt at any time we ſhould let them ſlip*, Heb. ii. 1. By this practice, we not only ſuffer them to ſlip, but open as it were a leak for their immediate diſcharge. Have we been under edifying impreſſions from our private exerciſes? The unerring direction is, *Quench not the Spirit*. Stifle not the ſerious deſires which he has awakened. Allow them their full ſcope, till they are formed into gracious habits. By the practice under conſideration, we pour water inſtead of oil upon the feeble flame. We extinguiſh what we ſhould cheriſh. Is the heavenly ſeed ſown in our breaſts? Theſe diſſipating interviews are the ravenous birds, which follow the ſeedſman, and devour the grain: ſo that nothing takes root. No fruit of faith, of joy, or love is produced.

Let me only add, that, on a dying-bed, the miſimprovement of all our time will be moſt bitterly regretted. How much more the miſimprovement of *thoſe* hours, which GOD himſelf has allowed, has ſet apart for the nobleſt purpoſes, and is wont to bleſs in an eſpecial manner! "While others were ſeeking the "pearl of great price, and gathering thoſe treaſures "of wiſdom and grace, which endure to everlaſting "life; I, alas! was ſquandering away the precious "opportunities in very vanity." To ſee the curtain of time dropping, to ſee a vaſt eternity opening before us, and to have ſuch reflections haunting our conſcience; this will cauſe miſery not to be expreſſed, create anguiſh not to be conceived.

OBJECTION II. Will it be ſaid, in anſwer to theſe conſiderations, "That company, even trifling "company, is a relaxation. We return to the in-"ſtruction of our families, and to our evening-devo-"tion with freſh alacrity, being ſick of theſe triflers?" A ſtrange argument! It ſhould rather be reverſed. The

objectors

objectors might truly say, Being sick of religion and its services, we want such triflers to afford us some relief. The sincere servant of *CHRIST* would find no recreation, but feel grief of heart, in such interviews. It must be a real affliction to observe his divine LORD absolutely disregarded; disregarded on the day peculiarly devoted to his honour; every vanity now preferred before him, as *Barabbas* the robber was formerly. The true refreshment for our souls consists in having our faith increased, our hope elevated, and our views of heaven enlarged; in contemplating the infinite perfection and glory of our Redeemer; the infinite grandeur and fulness of his propitiation; and our complete, I might have said, our infinite security from wrath and vengeance, by being interested in his merits.

OBJECTION III. "*Sunday* is the best part of "our time for this purpose; business is suspended; "every body is ready dressed; all circumstances in-"vite." Is it the best part of our time? Then let it be devoted to the best of beings. Who is more worthy of our choicest thoughts, affections, hours, than that divinely-compassionate Saviour, who offered himself, in the very prime of his life, a bleeding victim for our sins, that his sacrifice might have every recommending circumstance, which could render it acceptable to GOD, and available for man?

OBJECTION IV. "It is the universal custom. "To discontinue it, would render us unfashionable." And cannot you bear to be a little unfashionable for his sake, who was despised and rejected, who humbled himself to death, even the death of the cross, for your sake? Is it the universal custom? Then custom is the idol, which we are called to renounce. I must say of custom, in this case, as *Elijah* said of *Baal;* If custom be GOD, follow its dictates; but if JEHOVAH be GOD, observe his precepts. It is written in the scriptures, Rom. xii. 2. *Be not conformed*

formed to this world. To what does this prohibition relate? To such ungodly customs, no doubt. No battery of canon was ever pointed more directly against a citadel to be demolished, than this text against such customs. In indifferent matters, let the Christian avoid singularity; let him dress somewhat like his neighbours; let him make an appearance suitable to his station: but let him *not follow a multitude to* profane the Sabbath, or to *do* any *evil.* HERE religious persons should, by all means, be *singular;* should distinguish themselves by a *becoming* zeal for their GOD; should set an example, and shine as lights, in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation: otherwise, they may do, not themselves only, but others also, incredible harm.

OBJECTION V. Some perhaps may start, and reply, "If these things are so, to what a degree of "sinful negligence is even the Christian world arri-"ved!"—With regard to the world *called* Christian, this is too true. And no measure of sorrow can be sufficient to bewail the deplorable degeneracy. Negligence, or rather obstinacy, in this *capital* instance, is a melancholy indication of no less disobedience in *other* respects.

OBJECTION VI. "This will be irksome, will "render our religion a burden." I hope, no one that pretends to seriousness will offer to make this objection. The sinners in *Zion* made it. For which reason they are branded, and by the divine SPIRIT himself, with infamy that will never be blotted out: *O! what a weariness is it! when will the Sabbath,* and its irksome solemnities, *be gone? Mal.* i. 13. and *Amos* viii. 5. This discovers a heart alienated from GOD, that has not tasted the good word of grace, and savours not the things which be of *CHRIST.* Otherwise, such would be the language, "One day, "thus employed, is better than a thousand," *Psal.* lxxxiv. 10. Is it tedious and burdensome to pass

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a *ſingle* day in devout exerciſes? How then ſhall we paſs, how ſhall we endure *the ages* of eternity? ſince we are aſſured, that thoſe happy beings, who ſtand around the throne, clothed with white robes, ſerve their GOD day and night, for ever and ever, in his temple. In the regions of immortality they find a heaven; becauſe there they have a never-ceaſing and eternal communion with GOD; becauſe there they have an uninterrupted and everlaſting Sabbath.

A

TREATISE

ON THE

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

OF

DAUGHTERS.

Train up a child in the way she should go; and when she is old, she will not depart from it. Prov. xxii. 6.

ADVERTISEMENT.

AS this little treatise was intended for the press, by Mr HERVEY, he had transcribed it from his short-hand copy.—The candid reader will, however, make the proper allowances for a posthumous piece, which would undoubtedly have appeared less defective, had it been revised by the ingenious AUTHOR.

IT has long been a prevailing report, that, among persons of education and distinction, true religion is very rare. This, I would hope, is an invidious rumour, rather than a true representation of the case. May it not be an artifice

artifice of the grand enemy? calculated to bring the beſt and nobleſt of cauſes into diſrepute; as though politeneſs and piety were inconſiſtent; as though grace and good-breeding were irreconcileable.—Is then the faith of *CHRIST* quite fatal to refined manners? as the rod of *Moſes* was to the counterfeit miracles of the magicians. No: it is rather like the influence of the ſanctuary on the rod of *Aaron;* which, while it remained at a diſtance from the tabernacle, was a dry, ſapleſs, and barren ſtick; but, when depoſited before the ark, was quickened into vegetable light, was adorned with a milk-white bloom, and enriched with full-grown fruit; or, as the ſacred hiſtorian expreſſes this ſurpriſing fact, "It brought forth buds, and "bloomed bloſſoms, and yielded almonds." *Numb.* xvii. 8.

I find upon the liſt of ſaints, the moſt renowned kings, and victorious generals; the ableſt politicians, and the greateſt philoſophers: men, that have bid the ſun ſtand ſtill, and prolong the departing day; have laid an embargo upon darkneſs, and protracted the ſhades of night; have commanded the ground to cleave aſunder, and tranſmit their preſumptuous foes to a ſtrange and inevitable deſtruction; have divided the impetuous waves, and led their followers to ſafety and to conqueſt, through the depths of the ſea: men, who have walked in the burning fiery furnace, as under the ſhelter of an embowering arbour; and ſat in the lion's den, amidſt a herd of hungry monſters, with as much ſerenity, and as much ſecurity, as amidſt a circle of boſom-friends.

I myſelf have known various perſons, admired for their accompliſhed behaviour, and revered for their exalted ſtation, who have thought it their higheſt honour to be ſervants of JESUS CHRIST. My excellent friend *Camillus*, at whoſe houſe I now reſide, is one of the number. I cannot refrain from giving a portrait of *Camillus;* or rather, of a few of his moſt

distinguishing features: for to paint him in full proportion, as he daily appears, in all the mild, the benign majesty of—domestic authority,—parental government,—and Christian zeal;—to do this, would require a much abler hand than mine.

Camillus, not long ago, entertained in his house a young clergyman, who was always treated with a respect, suitable to the dignity of his office, and the piety of his behaviour. Having lately presented the worthy ecclesiastic to a living, and always requiring residence on the benefice, he is now destitute of a chaplain. Remembering, however, that all Christians are spiritual priests; he thinks it no dishonour to have an immediate and personal audience with the King of heaven; nor acting at all out of character, to represent the wants of his household, with his own mouth, at the throne of grace.

Before supper is introduced, the evening-incense ascends. This, rather than a later hour, is pitched upon, that the little congregation may join in the sacred service, with a lively devotion. After a plentiful meal, when the limbs are weary, people, even though kneeling, and in the presence of God, are more inclined to nod than to pour out their souls; are very, very apt to mistake the cushion for a pillow.—No servant is allowed to be absent; one only excepted, whose presence in the kitchen is absolutely necessary. Acquainted with their master's resolution, they are careful, so to manage their affairs, and dispatch their business, that no avoidable obstacle may intervene, to detain them from the stated worship.

When all are assembled, without either tumultuous disorder in their approach, or a slovenly negligence in their apparel, a chapter is read. *Camillus* makes the choice. He imagines, it is not so useful for his family, whose memories are weak, and their capacities scanty, to read the lesson for the day. He has, therefore, selected some of the most instructive and animating

portions

portions of ſcripture; and judges it adviſable to peruſe theſe again and again, rather than to go regularly through the whole inſpired writings.—The ſervants take it by turns to read; which improves them in the practice, and keeps them awake. If any of them diſcovers a diſpoſition to ſleep, to him the office is ſure to be aſſigned.

When the chapter is finiſhed, *Camillus* ſingles out ſome one verſe, of very weighty and edifying import; which for the ſpace of five or ſix minutes, he explains, applies, and affectionately urges upon their conſciences.—This done, with great ſerioufneſs, and profound reverence, he offers up evening-prayers. His prayers conſiſt of ſhort ſentences, and the whole is performed in a little time. Every part is pronounced with that deliberate ſlowneſs, and ſolemn accent, which command attention, and create awe. He makes a very perceivable pauſe, at the cloſe of each petition; that every one may have leiſure to add, in ſilence, a hearty Amen; and to recollect the merits of that bleſſed Redeemer, which render every thankſgiving acceptable, and every ſupplication ſucceſsful.

In the morning, before breakfaſt, the worſhip of the living God is renewed. At this juncture, *Camillus* omits the chapter; but requires one of his domeſtics to repeat the verſe on which he enlarged the preceding night. None knows which ſhall be called to this taſk; therefore every one is obliged to be properly prepared. He throws the ſubſtance of his exhortation into a few ſearching and intereſting queſtions, which he addreſſes to one of his children or ſervants: for, in this reſpect, no difference is made. All are equally enjoined to remember: all are equally accountable for what they hear.—Sometimes he encourages thoſe, whoſe anſwers ſhew, that they have given diligent heed to his inſtructions. Sometimes he puts on an air of ſeverity, mixed with tenderneſs, and reproves the notoriouſly-negligent. Always he re-inculcates the principal points;

charging them to retain the doctrines in their memory, and revolve them in their thoughts, while they are purſuing their reſpective buſineſs.—Theſe doctrines are the ſeed of faith; the root of godlineſs. Unleſs THESE be lodged in the mind, and operate on the heart, he never expects to have his domeſtics commence true believers, or real Chriſtians. No more than the huſbandman can reaſonably expect a crop in harveſt, without ſowing his field; or the floriſt promiſe himſelf a blow of tulips, without planting his parterre.

I have given a glimpſe of *Camillus*, at the head of his family; let me now ſhew my favourite in another attitude.—*Camillus* is convinced, that no truſt is of ſuperior, or of equal importance, to the tuitionary cultivation * of an immortal ſoul. As Providence has bleſſed him with two fine daughters, their preſent and future happineſs is the reigning object of his care. He has no intereſt ſo much at heart, as to give them a truly-refined education; ſuch as may render them an ornament and a bleſſing to ſociety, while they paſs the time of their ſojourning here below; and may train them up for a ſtate of everlaſting bliſs, when the world and its tranſitory ſcenes ſhall be no more.

Camillus never could perſuade himſelf to admire the maxims of prudence, ſaid to be gathered from the extravagant rant of our tragedies; and leſs is his eſteem for thoſe modeſt diſpoſitions, which people pretend to imbibe from the luſcious gallantries of comedy. For which reaſon, he has no impatient deſire to ſecure, for Miſs *Mitiſſa* and Miſs *Serena*, a place in the front-

* *Senſere, quid mens rite, quid indoles*
Nutrita fauſtis ſub penetralibus
Poſſet. Hor.

The meaning of which in *Engliſh* is:

"What could be done we know, were we but led
"By bright example, and by virtue bred."

front-box.—However, as we are apt immoderately to covet what is abſolutely forbidden, he has himſelf attended them, once or twice, to the theatrical entertainments, and public diverſions; thinking it much the ſafeſt method, that their curioſity ſhould be gratified under his own inſpection; and hoping to make them ſenſible how much they endanger their virtue, who too often frequent them; how ſhamefully they debaſe their affections, who are paſſionately fond of them; and what mere phantoms they follow, who ſeek for ſatisfaction in ſuch deluſory delights.

They learn to dance, in order to acquire a genteel air, and a graceful demeanor; not to ſhine at a ball, or win the worthleſs admiration of fops.—He is content to have them unacquainted with the wild and romantic fables of Heathen poetry; nor is under any painful apprehenſions of damping the ſprightlineſs of their temper, though they have no taſte for the chimerical adventures of our romances, and are ſtrangers to the looſe intrigues of our novels; being fully perſuaded, that there is as much ſound ſenſe, as ſmartneſs of thought, in that celebrated ſaying,

Retire, and read your BIBLE, to be gay;
There truths abound of ſovereign aid to peace * *!*

He has introduced them to the knowledge of hiſtory, and its inſtructive facts. They have a tolerable idea of the four univerſal monarchies, ſo eminent for their great events, and ſo circumſtantially foretold in ſcripture. They have been led through the moſt remarkable tranſactions of our own country, and are pretty well acquainted with the preſent ſtate of *Europe*. They have, all along, been taught to obſerve the wonderful revolutions of empires, and the adorable procedure of providence: that they may diſcern how *the faſhion of this world paſſeth away* †; and how *happy are the people*,

* Dr *Young*'s eighth night-thought.

† 1 *Cor.* vii. 31. Not only the little projects and puny achievements

ple, how happy the perſons, *who have the LORD for their GOD*. They have been taught to obſerve the honourable ſucceſs, that has uſually attended the practice of integrity, guided by prudence; together with the ſcandal and ruin which have always purſued Folly in her ſenſeleſs rambles, and dogged Vice to her horrid haunts: that they may ſee the rocks on which ſome have ſplit, and avoid the deſtructive track; ſee the road, which has conducted others to the haven of happineſs, and ſteer the ſame auſpicious courſe.

They have been initiated in geography, and underſtand the ſeveral diviſions of the globe; the extent of its principal kingdoms; and the manners of their various inhabitants. They will tell you the peculiar commodities which each climate produces: whence comes the tea, that furniſhes their breakfaſt; and whence the ſugar that renders it palatable: what mountains ſupply them with wines, and what iſlands ſend them their ſpices: in what groves the ſilk-worms ſpin the materials for their cloaths; and what mines * ſupply them with the diamonds that ſparkle in their ear-rings.—A ſcreen, covered with a ſet of coloured maps, and a cuſtom of referring from the public papers to thoſe beautiful draughts, has rendered the acquiſition of this knowledge

achievements of private perſons; but the power of diſtinguiſhed families; the policies of mighty ſtates; the magnificence of the greateſt kingdoms; all, all are in a ſtate of perpetual fluctuation. They *fade away* (as the apoſtle moſt ſignificantly deſcribes the caſe) like the graceful and gloſſy aſpect of ſome delicate flower, when the ſun ariſes with a ſcorching heat, *Jam.* i. 11. They *paſs away* (as the prophet ſtill more emphatically ſpeaks) like the chaff of the ſummer threſhing-floors, which the wind carries off on its wings, and the place thereof is known no more, *Dan.* ii. 34.

* The beſt of the diamond mines are in the kingdom of *Golconda*, near to *MADRASS* (or *Fort St George*, as it is frequently called, becauſe the *Eaſt-India* company have *ſo* named the fort they have built, for the ſecurity of their important factory at *Madraſs*.)

knowledge a diverſion rather than a taſk; has enticed them into a valuable branch of ſcience, under the inviting diſguiſe of amuſement.—This ſerves to enlarge their apprehenſions of things; gives them magnificent thoughts of the great Creator; and may help to ſuppreſs that ſilly ſelf-admiration, which prompts ſo many pretty idols, to fancy themſelves the only conſiderable creatures under heaven.

They ſpell to perfection; and have obtained this art, by a ſort of play, rather than by laborious application. Whenever they aſked any little gratification, it has been their papa's cuſtom to make them ſpell the word; which if they performed aright, they ſeldom failed to ſucceed in their requeſt.—They are miſtreſſes of the needle; and the youngeſt, whoſe genius inclines that way, is expert in uſing the pencil. Muſic is their recreation, not their buſineſs. The eldeſt, to a ſkilful finger, adds a melodious and well-regulated voice. She often entertains me with ſinging an anthem to her harpſichord. Entertains, did I ſay? ſhe really edifies me. Theſe truly-excellent performances exalt the deſires, and compoſe the affections. They inſpire ſuch a ſerenity of delight, as leaves neither a ſting in the conſcience, nor a ſtain on the imagination. Methinks, they bring us a little antepaſt of heaven, and tune our ſouls for its harmonious joys.

Thoroughly verſed in the moſt practical parts of arithmetic, they have each her week, wherein to be intruſted with the management of a ſum of money. This they diſburſe, as circumſtances require, for the ſmaller neceſſaries of the family. Of this they keep an exact account, and make a regular entry of each particular in their day-book.—Not long ago, a tenant of inferior rank came to *Camillus* with his rent. Inſtead of receiving it himſelf, he referred him to Miſs *Serena*. You would have been delighted to obſerve the behaviour of our little landlady, on this occaſion; the engaging condeſcenſion, with which ſhe addreſſed

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the honeſt ruſtic; the tender good-nature, with which ſhe inquired after my dame and the family at home; the ready dexterity with which ſhe wrote and ſubſcribed a proper receipt; and, above all, her amiable generoſity, in returning half a crown, to buy a copy-book for his eldeſt ſon; "who," he ſaid, "was juſt going in-"to joining-hand; but, he feared, would never come "to ſpell or write half ſo well as her Ladyſhip."

Though *Camillus* is careful to ground them betimes in the rules of œconomy, he is equally careful to cultivate a ſpirit of diſcreet beneficence.—A few days ago, when my friend and his lady were abroad, Miſs *Mitiſſa* was informed of a poor woman in the pariſh juſt brought to bed, after a long and hard labour; who, being unhappily married to a ſot of a fellow, was, at a time when the choiceſt comforts are ſcarcely ſufficient, deſtitute of the meaneſt conveniencies. Upon hearing the calamitous caſe, ſhe immediately diſpatched a ſervant, with a crown from her weekly ſtock: part, to buy for the afflicted creature ſome preſent accommodations; and part, to defray the expences, at ſuch a juncture, unavoidable: but gave a ſtrict charge, that the whole ſhould be employed for the relief of the diſtreſſed mother, and her helpleſs infant; none of it fingered or enjoyed by the worthleſs drone her huſband. When *Camillus* returned, he was ſo pleaſed with this ſeaſonable and well-judged charity, that, beſides his commendation and careſſes, he farther rewarded our conſiderate matron-like benefactreſs, by making her a preſent of *Clariſſa* *. For he always contrives to make what tends to their improvement, the matter of their reward. If they have committed a fault, they are forbid the privilege of uſing their maps. If they have behaved in a becoming manner, their recompenſe is, not a piece of money, or a paper of ſweet-meats, but ſome new inſtruction

* A book admirably calculated to inſtruct and entertain; wrote by the celebrated Mr RICHARDSON, in eight volumes.

ſtruction on the globe, ſome new leſſon on the harpſichord, which may at once delight and improve them.

To prevent a haughty carriage, and to worm out all inordinate ſelf-love, he teaches them to conſider their neighbours, as members of the ſame univerſal family, and children of the ſame almighty Father. However poor in their circumſtances, or mean in their aſpect, they are the objects of GOD's infinitely-tender regards;—of that GOD who has given his own Son to ſuffer death for their pardon, and has prepared a heaven of endleſs bliſs for their final reception. For which reaſon they ſhould deſpiſe none, but honour all; ſhould be as ready to do them good, as the hand is ready to ſooth the eye when it ſmarts, or eaſe the head when it aches.—One afternoon, when he was going to treat them with an orange, he bid each of them bring a fine toy, lately received for a preſent. It was made in the ſhape of a knife; the handle of ivory, and inlaid with they gayeſt colours; the blade of glaſs, moſt dazzlingly bright, but without an edge. Cut the orange in two, ſaid their pappa. When they both tried with their pretty knives, and, to their no ſmall mortification, both failed; he furniſhed them with another, of more ordinary appearance, but tolerably ſharp. With this they eaſily pierced the rind, and came at the delicious juice. "Who now," ſaid *Camillus*, "would not prefer one ſuch ſerviceable, tho' "plain utenſil, to a hundred of thoſe glittering, but "worthleſs trifles? And you, my dear children, if "you have no other recommendations, than a ſhewy "perſon, and the trappings of dreſs; you will be as "contemptible in your generation, as that inſignificant "bauble. But if it is the deſire of your hearts, and "the endeavour of your lives, to be extenſively uſe-"ful; you will gain, and, what is better, you will "deſerve reſpect; your names will be precious, and "your memories bleſſed."

With equal watchfulneſs, he diſcountenances all

thoſe acts of petulent barbarity, which children are ſo apt to exerciſe on the reptile creation. He will allow no court of inquiſition to be erected within his houſe; no, not upon the moſt deſpicable, or even the noxious animals. The very nuiſances that are endued with life, he thinks ſhould be diſpatched, not with a lingering butchery, but with a merciful expedition.—To rend in pieces a poor fly, and feaſt their eyes with the mangled limbs, ſhivering and convulſed in the pangs of death; to impale a wretched inſect on the needle or the bodkin; and, what is ſtill more ſhocking, to take pleaſure in hearing its paſſionate moan, and ſeeing its agonizing ſtruggles; ſuch practices he abſolutely forbids, as inſufferable violations of nature's law; ſuch as tend to extinguiſh the ſoft emotions of pity, and inure the mind to a habit of inhumanity.—He often informs his lovely pupils, that every living creature is ſenſible of pain; that none can be abuſed in this cruel manner, without ſuffering very exquiſite miſery. To turn their torments into paſtime, and make ſport with their anguiſh, is a rigour more than tyrannical, worſe than brutal; is the very reverſe of that benign Providence, whoſe *tender mercies are over ALL his works*.

He propoſes to give them a taſte of *natural philoſophy*, and to accommodate them with the beſt microſcopes; that the uſe of *theſe* inſtruments, and a ſpice of *that* knowledge, may inſpire them with an early admiration of nature's works, and with the deepeſt veneration of nature's almighty Author.—*Camillus* has no deſign to finiſh a couple of female philoſophers; or to divert their attention from thoſe domeſtic arts, which are the trueſt accompliſhments of the ſex *: yet neither would he have his daughters debarred from that rational and exalted delight, which is to be found

* ——For nothing lovelier can be found
In woman, than to ſtudy houſehold good. MILT.

found in the contemplating the curiosities of the great Creator's cabinet. Why may they not, without departing from their *own*, or encroaching on the *masculine* character; why may they not be acquainted with the accurately-nice structure of an animal, or with the process and effects of vegetation? Why may they not learn the admirable operations of the air, or the wonderful properties of the water? have some general notion of the immense magnitudes, the prodigious distances, and the still more amazing revolutions of the heavenly orbs? He apprehends it very practicable, to conduct an entertainment with dignity, and order a family with propriety; even while they retain some tolerable idea of those magnificent laws, which regulate the system of the universe.

The microscope, whenever they are inclined to amuse themselves, will shew them a profusion of splendid ornaments, in some of the most common and contemptible objects. It will shew them gold and embroidery, diamonds and pearl, azure, green, and vermilion, where unassisted eyes behold nothing but provocatives of their abhorrence. This instrument will shew them the brightest varnish, and the most curious carving, even in the minutest scraps of existence. Far more surprising than the magic feats of the most dexterous juggler, it will treat their sight, not with delusive, but with real wonders. A huge elephant * shall stalk, where a puny mite was wont to crawl. Blood shall bound from the beating heart, and eyes sparkle with a lively lustre; limbs shall play the most sprightly motions, or stand composed in the most graceful attitudes; where nothing ordinarily appeared, but a confused speck of animated matter.—A tincture of philosophy will be the *cosmetic* of nature; will

* What is allusively said of the detracting tongue, may, I think, without a figure, be affirmed of this wonderful instrument. *Trabem in festuca, elephantem in culice, Alpes et Pyrenæos saltus in verruca ostendit.*

render all her ſcenes lovely, and all her apartments a theatre of diverſion; diverſions infinitely ſuperior to thoſe dangerous delights which are ſo apt to inveigle the affections, and debauch the minds of young people.—When Philoſophy lends her optics, an unclouded morning, beautiful with the riſing ſun; a clear night, brilliant with innumerable ſtars; will be a more pleaſing ſpectacle, than the gaudieſt illuminations of the aſſembly-room. The melody of birds, and the murmur of fountains; the humming inſect, and the ſighing gale; will be a higher gratification, than the fineſt airs of an opera. A field covered with corn, or a meadow beſprinkled with daiſies; a marſh planted with oſiers, or a mountain ſhaded with oaks; will yield a far more agreeable proſpect than the moſt pompous ſcenes that decorate the ſtage. Should clouds overcaſt the heavens, or winter diſrobe the flowers; an inquiry into the cauſes of theſe grand viciſſitudes, will more than compenſate the tranſitory loſs. A diſcovery of the divine wiſdom and divine goodneſs, in theſe ſeemingly-diſaſtrous changes, will impart gaiety to the moſt gloomy ſky, and make the moſt unornamented ſeaſons ſmile.

It is for want of ſuch truly elegant and ſatisfactory amuſements, that ſo many ladies of the firſt diſtinction, and fineſt genius, have no proper employ for their delicate capacities; but loſe their happineſs in flights of caprice, or fits of the vapour; loſe their time in the moſt inſipid chat, or the moſt whimſical vagaries; while thought is a burthen, and reflection is a drudgery, ſolitude fills them with horror, and a ſerious diſcourſe makes them melancholy.

Above all, *Camillus* is moſt earneſtly deſirous to have his tender charge grounded in the principles, and actuated with the ſpirit of Chriſtianity. No ſcheme, he is thoroughly perſuaded, was ever ſo wiſely calculated to ſweeten their tempers, to exalt their affections, and form them to felicity, either in this world

world or another. It is therefore his daily endeavour, by the moſt eaſy and endearing methods of inſtruction, to fill their minds with the knowledge of thoſe heavenly doctrines; and win their hearts to the love of that invaluable book, in which they are delineated.—He longs to have a ſenſe of GOD Almighty's goodneſs impreſſed on their ſouls. From this ſource, under the influences of the ſanctifying Spirit, he would derive all the graces, and all the duties of godlineſs *. With this view, he ſpeaks of the Divine Majeſty, not only as ſupereminently great, but as moſt tranſcendently poſſeſſed of every delightful, every charming excellence. He repreſents all the comforts they enjoy, and every bleſſing they receive, as the gifts of his bountiful hand, and as an earneſt of unſpeakably-richer favours. He often, often reminds them, that whatever their heavenly Father *commands*, *forbids*, *inflicts*, proceeds from his overflowing kindneſs, and is intended for their eternal good, if, by theſe expedients, he may awaken in their minds an habitual gratitude to their everlaſting Benefactor. The actings of which noble principle, are not only fruitful in every good work, but productive of the trueſt ſatisfaction: ſomewhat like the fragrant ſtreams of conſecrated incenſe; which, while they honoured the great object of worſhip, regaled with their pleaſing perfumes of devout worſhip.

Nothing is more diſpleaſing to *Camillus*, than the fond flatteries, which their injudicious admirers beſtow

* This method is perfectly conformable to the practice of the Pſalmiſt; *Thy loving-kindneſs is ever before mine eyes, and*, animated by this ſweet inducement, *I will walk in thy truth*, Pſal. xxvi. 3.—To the injunction of our divine Maſter; *If you love me*, let this be the proof, this the fruit of your affection, *keep my commandments*, John xiv. 15.—And to the experience of the chief of the apoſtles; *The love of Chriſt*, though not excluſive of, yet ſuperior to every other motive, *conſtraineth us*, 2 Cor. v. 14.

ſtow on their ſhape and their complexion, the graceſulneſs of their carriage, and the vivacity of their wit. He would fain make them ſenſible, that theſe embelliſhments are of the loweſt value, and moſt fading nature * ;—that if they render their poſſeſſors vain and ſelf-conceited, they are far greater blemiſhes, than a hump on the back, a wen in the neck, or ſtuttering in the ſpeech.—He would have them thoroughly convinced, that, notwithſtanding all their ſilks, diamonds, and other marks of their ſuperior circumſtances, they are ignorant, guilty, impotent creatures; blind to truths of the laſt importance; deſerving the vengeance of eternal fire, and unable of themſelves to think a good thought: that, from ſuch convictions, they may perceive their abſolute need of a Saviour; a Saviour in all his offices;—as a Prophet, to teach them heavenly wiſdom;—as a Prieſt, to atone for all their many, many ſins; as a King, to ſubdue their iniquities, write his laws in their hearts, and make them, in all their converſation, holy.

In ſhort, the point he chiefly labours, is, to work in their hearts a deep, an abiding ſenſe, that GOD is their ſupreme, their only good; that the bleſſed JESUS is the rock of their hopes, and the fountain of their ſalvation; that all their dependence, for acquiring the beauties of holineſs, and taſting the joys of the ſublimeſt virtue, is to be placed on the HOLY GHOST the Comforter.—Amidſt all theſe efforts

* Here is the amiable and noble reverſe of that modiſh picture repreſented by *Milton*:

For that fair female troop thou ſaw'ſt, that ſeem'd
Of goddeſſes, ſo blithe, ſo ſmooth, ſo gay,
Yet empty of all good, wherein conſiſts
Woman's domeſtic honour and chief praiſe;
Bred only and completed to the taſte
Of luſtful appetence, to ſing, to dance,
To dreſs, and troll the tongue, and roll the eye.
B. XI. 614.

forts of his own, he never forgets, never fails to plead, that precious promiſe of the unchangeable JEHOVAH; *I will pour my ſpirit upon thy ſeed, and my bleſſing upon thy offſpring, and they ſhall grow up*, in knowledge and in grace, *as willows by the water-courſes* *.

A lady of brilliant parts, but no very extraordinary piety, told *Camillus*, that he would ſpoil the pretty dears; would extinguiſh that decent pride, and fondneſs for pleaſure, which are ſhining qualifications in an accompliſhed young lady; which give her an elevation of ſentiment, and a delicacy of taſte, greatly ſuperior to the ignoble vulgar.—To whom he replied, "Far from extirpating their paſſions, I only attempt "to turn them into a right channel, and direct them "to the worthieſt objects. Willing I am, that they "ſhould have a decent ambition; an ambition, not "to catch the giddy coxcomb's eye, or be the hack-"neyed toaſt of rakes; but to pleaſe their parents; "to make a huſband happy; and to promote the glo-"ry of God.—They may entertain a fondneſs for "pleaſure; but ſuch pleaſure as will ennoble their ſouls, "afford them ſubſtantial ſatisfaction, and prepare them "for the fruition of immortal bliſs.—Let them be co-"vetous alſo, if you pleaſe, Madam; but covetous of "redeeming their time, and of gaining intellectual "improvement; covetous of thoſe riches, which no "moth can corrupt, nor thief ſteal; which neither "time nor death deſtroy."

In all theſe inſtances of parental ſolicitude, his beloved *Emilia* takes her conſtant, her willing ſhare; contributes

* *If.* xliv. 3, 4. A promiſe of ineſtimable worth; never to be forgotten by believing parents; better, to their children, than the largeſt patrimony, or the richeſt dowery.—It is exceedingly beautiful, and equally comfortable. Not, I will *drop*, I will *diſtill*, but I will *pour:* denoting a large and copious ſupply. They ſhall grow, not as a *root* out of a *dry* ground; but as a *tree*, planted in a moſt *kindly* ſoil, where it is plentifully *watered*, and *flouriſhes* in the moſt ample manner.

contributes her advice, in every plan that is concerted; and her hearty concurrence in every expedient that is executed; every expedient, for poliſhing the human jewel *, and making their manners as faultleſs as their forms.—May the GOD of infinite goodneſs, the ſacred ſource of all perfection, proſper their endeavours! that, as the young ladies are adorned, in their perſons, with native beauty, they may be enriched, in their underſtandings, with refined knowledge; and dignified, in their ſouls, with the ſpirit of the bleſſed JESUS.—Then, ſurely, more amiable objects, the eye of man cannot behold; more deſirable partners, the heart of man cannot wiſh.

* Delightful taſk! to rear the tender thought,
To teach the young idea how to ſhoot,
And pour the freſh inſtruction o'er the mind.
THOMSON's Spring.

PRE-

PREFACE,

TO

BURNHAM's PIOUS MEMORIALS *.

RELIGION, or an affectionate and firm connection of the ſoul with God, is the higheſt improvement of the human mind, and the brighteſt ornament of the rational nature. It is the moſt indiſſoluble bond of civil ſociety, and the only foundation of happineſs to every individual perſon.

The *goſpel*, by which we have acceſs to the King immortal, inviſible, through the merits of *Jeſus Chriſt*; by which we are conformed to his amiable and holy image, through the operations of the bleſſed Spirit;—the goſpel is, of all other religions, moſt exquiſitely adapted to compaſs thoſe deſirable ends.

This point hath often been demonſtrated with all the ſtrength of *argument*, and illuſtrated by every decoration of *eloquence*.—In the following ſheets, we are preſented with a *new* proof of the ſame important truth; deduced from a topic *level* to every capacity, and from a ſcene in which all muſt, ſooner or later, be *perſonally* concerned.

Nothing ſtrikes the mind of a wiſe and attentive obſerver ſo forcibly as *fact*; nothing hath ſo ſtrong a tendency to convince the judgment, and influence the conduct. In the Collection before us, we have a ſeries

* Referred to in Mr HERVEY's Life, page vii.

ſeries of indubitable and intereſting facts.—Here are *ſome* of the moſt *renowned*, *many* of the moſt *worthy* perſons, after a life of exemplary devotion and exalted virtue, bearing their dying teſtimony to the *excellency* of the goſpel, and the *pleaſures* of religion:—Perſons from different countries, of different denominations, and flouriſhing in diſtant periods of time:—Perſons in the moſt awful moments of their exiſtence; when hypocriſy drops the maſk; when worldly motives loſe their weight; and there remains no more temptation to deceive;—all theſe, uniting in the ſame ſentiments; all repoſing their confidence on the ſame GREAT MEDIATOR; all proclaiming the *dignity*, *efficacy*, and *glory* of the evangelical ſyſtem, in a manner ſuperior to language:—proclaiming it by a peace of conſcience, which the whole world cannot give; and a joy of heart, which tranſcends all deſcription.

Such a collection of Memoirs is, I think, a valuable addition to the evidences for Chriſtianity; a conſiderable aid to the intereſts of piety; and worthy, both of *frequent peruſal*, and *univerſal acceptance*.

A work of this nature hath often appeared to me among the *deſiderata* of the cloſet. I have ſometimes wondered, that no ingenious pen hath attempted it; and always thought, that, when duly executed, it would bid fair for *extenſive uſefulneſs*. But I am glad to find myſelf anticipated in this opinion by a writer *, whoſe words I ſhall beg leave to tranſcribe, and whoſe judgment cannot be queſtioned:—"There is nothing "in hiſtory which is ſo improving to the reader, as "thoſe accounts which we meet with of the deaths of "eminent perſons, and of their behaviour in that "dreadful ſeaſon †."—*Here* is a large field, in which the reader may not barely glean a few *ears*, but gather his *ſheaves*, or reap a *harveſt* of that ſacred improvement, which our admired critic mentions. *Here* is a multitude

* Mr *Addiſon*. † *Spectator*, vol. IV. N° 289.

multitude of those most *distinguished* and *animating* parts of history, traced through various ages of the church; from the heroic martyrdom of venerable *Ignatius*, to the peaceful exit of the pious and ingenious Dr *Watts*.

These histories are not only unquestionably true, but of the most *unexceptionable* kind.—They are delivered in the very words of the author from whose writings they are extracted: so that we may depend upon a strict *exactness* in point of authenticity, and shall be entertained with an agreeable *diversity* in reference to style. None of these accounts personate the romantic insensibility of the *Stoic*, or the brutal hardiness of the *Sceptic*. None of them exhibit the indecent levity of a *Petronius*, or the pitiable fluctuation of a *Socrates*. But all display *true* fortitude, *rational* tranquillity, and *well-grounded* hope; built upon the divine promises, supported by the divine Spirit, rendered stedfast and immoveable by a divine propitiation and righteousness.

Here the minister of the gospel may furnish himself with noble materials, to *enrich* and *enliven* his compositions for the pulpit. And I dare venture to foretell, that no part of his public addresses will be heard with a closer attention, or collected with a sweeter relish, than his pertinent application of the last sayings of truly religious men.

Here the *strong* Christian may view, not without a glow of gratitude, perhaps with a rapture of delight, the *inviolable faithfulness* of his divine Master; who never leaves nor forsakes his servants; no, not at that trying season, which may most emphatically be styled, *the time of need*. He may view the *never failing tenderness* and grace of that good Spirit, who opens the rich promises of scripture; applies the precious atonement of a Saviour; and *makes* the soldier of JESUS *always to triumph*.

Here the *feeble*, *trembling* believer may see imperfect creatures, men of like passions and of like infirmities with himself, looking death in the face with *intrepidity*. He may hear them addressing that ghastly monarch, in the triumphant language of the apostle, *O Death, where is thy sting!*—To hear and see this, will be a more effectual expedient to establish his heart, more sovereign to deliver him from the *bondage of fear*, than the most spirited exhortations, or the most sage directions.

Should the *unbeliever* be so impartial, as to mark these disciples of JESUS, and consider the end of their conversation; he must surely acknowledge, both the *divine* origin, and *unequalled* energy of the glorious gospel; since it administers such *strong* consolation, amidst the pains of a mortal distemper, and the ruins of dissolving nature.—Vain, inexpressibly vain and insignificant, must every other scheme of salvation appear, which is destitute of an all-sufficient Redeemer, and void of an almighty Comforter.

Should the *libertine*, in a serious interval, approach these death-beds of the just; he may behold the *genuine* fruits of faith unfeigned, and the *blessed* consequences of vital holiness.—And *where* can he behold

A scene, so strong to strike, so sweet to charm,
So great to raise, so heavenly to inspire,
So solid to support fair Virtue's throne * ?

Or *how* can he behold all this, without feeling some pangs of *salutary* regret; without entering into himself, and forming some useful reflections?—"Will my "vitious gratifications create such sweet *composure*, "such humble *joy*, such heavenly *hope*, at the last awful hour? Alas! will they not rather sharpen the "fatal arrow; add poison to the point, and anguish, "inconceiveable anguish, to the wound?"

There

* Night-Thoughts, night II.

There may be, and there doubtleſs is, a variety of treatiſes, written upon a variety of ſubjects, in which many people are no way intereſted. But the ſubject of *this* book appertains to *all*. It is appointed, and by an irrevocable decree, that *all* muſt die. *There is no diſcharge in this warfare;* no, not for the votaries of gaiety and indolence.—This conſideration, methinks, ſhould incline even the *gay* and *indolent* to obſerve what is tranſacted in the antechamber to thoſe apartments, where they themſelves muſt ſhortly lodge. And would they, from the enſuing narratives, make their obſervation, they might be led to entertain more *favourable* apprehenſions of our holy religion.—They would find, that, far from *embittering* life, it *ſweetens* death. Inſtead of damping the enjoyments of health, it ſoftens the bed of ſickneſs, and ſooths even the agonies of diſſolution.—Why then ſhould they be afraid of pure and undefiled religion? why ſtand aloof, why withdraw themſelves, from its benign invitations? Can *that* throw a gloom upon the delectable hills, which is able to gild and gladden the valley of darkneſs?

Some, perhaps, may be prompted by *curioſity* to caſt an eye upon this ſolemn and auguſt ſpectacle;—a multitude of rational beings, arrived on the very borders of the inviſible ſtate,—bidding a final adieu to time,—and juſt launching out into the abyſſes of eternity.—And, bleſſed be the divine goodneſs, the ſpectacle is as *delightful* as it is *auguſt*. Their GOD, their GOD ſuſtains them in the greateſt extremity.—*They overcome* the laſt enemy *through the blood of the LAMB*.—Their diſcourſes ſavour of heaven;—their hopes are full of immortality.—And is not *this* a privilege devoutly to be wiſhed *? Who, that has the leaſt ſerioufneſs, or feels

* Even a *Pagan* writer could not but diſcern the excellency of ſuch a bleſſing; and made it one of the *principal* ingredients which conſtitute happineſs.

Felix,

feels any concern for his true happineſs, can forbear crying out, on ſuch an occaſion, LET ME DIE THE DEATH OF THE RIGHTEOUS *!

Life, take thy chance. But oh! for ſuch an end †!

Upon the whole, I would perſuade myſelf, that THE PIOUS MEMORIALS may be *a word in ſeaſon*, a welcome and well-adapted addreſs to readers of *every* character;—may be a means, in the hand of Providence, to awaken the *thoughtleſs*, and fix their attention upon important and everlaſting things;—may tend to reclaim the *diſſolute* from ruinous practices, and engage them in the purſuit of thoſe ſubſtantial acquiſitions, which will "bring them peace at the laſt;" —may animate the *Chriſtian* to freſh zeal and renewed activity, in the ſervice of our adorable IMMANUEL. —That each, while he is running his race, may be *inſpirited* to ſay, with the holy apoſtle, *To me to live is CHRIST;* and each, when he hath finiſhed his courſe, may be emboldened to add, *To me to die is gain.*

With *this* aim the narratives were collected; with *this* aim they are publiſhed. May the LORD of all power and might make them effectual to accompliſh what is ſo laudably deſigned! *Then* it will not be deemed a piece of officious impertinence, or preſuming boldneſs,

> *Felix, qui potuit rerum cognoſcere cauſas,*
> *Atque* metus omnes, *et* inexorabile fatum,
> *Subjecit pedibus,* ſtrepitumque Acherontis *avari.*
> VIRG. Georg. lib. II.

I wiſh I could do juſtice to *Virgil*'s beautiful lines: but, though I dare not attempt a tranſlation, I will aſſure the unlearned reader, that no book in our language, none, at leaſt, that I am acquainted with, contains ſo copious an *exemplification* of their meaning, as the following pages afford. Here he may ſee what the *charming poet* ſo delicately deſcribes, but what the *poor Heathen* never knew where to find.

* Numb. xxiii. 10. † Night-thoughts, night II.

boldneſs, for me to recommend them: it will rather be looked upon as an act of *friendſhip* to the deceaſed author, and his diſtreſſed widow;—as an effort of true, of Chriſtian *benevolence* to my fellow-creatures;—and a proper expreſſion of my *gratitude* to the Public, for that remarkable candour and indulgence ſhewn to

Their obliged, and

Very humble ſervant,

Weſton-Favell,
July 18. 1753.

JAMES HERVEY.

A

LETTER

TO

Mr JOHN TRAILL late Bookſeller in Edinburgh, now Miniſter of a Congregation of Proteſtant Diſſenters at Chelſea, near London.

SIR,

I Received your very valuable and no leſs acceptable preſent *, ſome weeks ago. I ſhould have acknowledged the favour ſooner; but I choſe to ſtay till I had taſted the diſh you ſet before me. And indeed I find it to be ſavoury meat, the true manna; food for the ſoul.

Your worthy relative † was a workman that need not be aſhamed. He knew how, clearly to ſtate and ſolidly to eſtabliſh the faith of GOD's elect, and the doctrine according to godlineſs.—O! that my heart, and the heart of every reader, may be opened by the eternal SPIRIT, to receive the precious truths!

The letter at the end of the firſt volume ‡, is a judicious performance. It rightly divides the word of truth, and lays the line, with a maſterly hand, between the

* Mr Traill had ſent Mr Hervey a copy of his new edition of the firſt two volumes of the works of the Rev. Mr Robert Traill late miniſter in London. The third volume was not republiſhed till after Mr Hervey's death.

† Mr Robert Traill was uncle to Mr John Traill.

‡ This letter is entitled, *A vindication of the Proteſtant doctrine concerning juſtification, and of its preachers and profeſſors, from the unjuſt charge of Antinomianiſm.*

the presumptuous legalist, and the licentious Antinomian.—I am particularly pleased with the honourable testimony bore to those two excellent books, Dr *Owen*'s treatise on justification, and Mr *Marshall*'s gospel-mystery of sanctification *: Books fit to be recommended by so good a judge!

If the LORD pleases to give THERON and ASPASIO any acceptance in *Scotland*, I shall be sincerely glad; but if he vouchsafes to make them, not only welcome, but useful visitants, I shall exceedingly rejoice.—In case you should think them calculated to promote the honour and further the gospel of *JESUS CHRIST*, I hope you will favour them with your recommendation, and accompany them with your prayers; which will be a fresh instance of kindness to,

SIR,

Weston, July 8. 1755. Your obliged friend, and obedient servant,

JAMES HERVEY.

PRO-

* "I think," says Mr Traill, "that Dr *Owen*'s excellent "book of justification, and Mr *Marshall*'s book of the mys- "tery of sanctification by faith in Jesus Christ, are such vin- "dications and confirmations of the Protestant doctrine, a- "gainst which I fear no effectual opposition.—Mr *Marshall* "was a holy and retired person, and is only known to the "most of us by his book lately published. The book is a deep, "practical, well-jointed discourse, and requires a more than "ordinary attention in reading of it with profit. And, if it "be singly used, I look upon it as one of the most useful "books the world hath seen for many years. Its excellence "is, that it leads the serious reader directly to Jesus Christ, "and cuts the sinews and overturns the foundation of the "new divinity, by the same argument of gospel-holiness, by "which many attempt to overturn the old. And, as it hath "already had the seal of high approbation by many judicious "ministers and Christians that have read it; so I fear not "but it will stand firm as a rock against all opposition, and "will prove good seed, and food, and light to many here- "after."—*See above, vol.* III. *p.* 389. *and vol.* IV. *p.* 434.

PROMISES,

To be paſted at the beginning of a Bible.

GOD hath given us exceeding great and precious promiſes, that by theſe we might be partakers of the divine nature. 2 Pet. i. 4.

DIVINE TEACHING.

Iſ. xxix. 18. The eyes of the blind ſhall ſee out of obſcurity.

Jer. xxxi. 34. They ſhall all know me, from the leaſt of them unto the greateſt of them.

John xiv. 26. The Holy Ghoſt ſhall teach you all things.

Iſ. lviii. 11. The LORD ſhall guide thee continually.

PARDON.

Iſ. xliii. 25. I am he that blotteth out thy tranſgreſſions.

Iſ. i. 18.—Sins as ſcarlet—ſhall be as white as ſnow.

1 Pet. ii. 24. Who his own ſelf bare our ſins, in his own body, on the tree.

1 John i. 7. The blood of JESUS CHRIST cleanſeth from all ſin.

JUSTIFICATION.

Rom. viii. 33, 34.—It is GOD that juſtifieth.

Rom. iii. 21, 22, 23, 24.—Juſtified freely by his grace.

Iſ. xlv. 24, 25. In the LORD have I righteouſneſs.

2 Cor. v. 21. We are made the righteouſneſs of GOD in him.

SANCTIFICATION.

Ezek. xi. 19, 20. I will put a new ſpirit within you.

Tit. ii. 14. CHRIST gave himſelf for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity.

Heb. viii. 10, 11, 12. I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts.

1 Theſſ. v. 23. The GOD of peace ſanctify—your whole ſpirit, and ſoul, and body.

PRO-

PROMISES,

To be paſted at the end of a Bible.

TEMPORAL BLESSINGS.

1 Tim. iv. 8. Godlineſs hath the promiſe of the life that now is.
Pſal. xxxvii. 3. Verily thou ſhalt be fed.
Matth. vi. 33. Seek firſt the kingdom of GOD, and all things ſhall be added.
1 Tim. vi. 17. Who giveth us all things richly to enjoy.

TEMPTATION.

1 Cor. x. 13. GOD will not ſuffer you to be tempted above that ye are able.
2 Cor. xii. 9. My GRACE is ſufficient for thee.
Rom. vi. 14. Sin ſhall not have dominion over you.
Luke xxii. 32. I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not.

AFFLICTION.

Job v. 17. Happy is the man whom GOD correcteth.
Lam. iii. 32. Tho' he cauſe grief, yet will he have compaſſion.
Pſal. l. 15. Call upon me in trouble; I will deliver thee.
Rev. iii. 19. As many as I love, I rebuke and chaſten.

DEATH.

1 Cor. xv. 55, 56, 57. GOD giveth us the victory, through our LORD JESUS CHRIST.
2 Cor. v. 1. If our earthly houſe is diſſolved, we have a building of GOD.
John iii. 16. Whoſoever believeth, ſhall have everlaſting life.
Pſal. xxiii. 4. Though I paſs through death, I will fear no evil.

CONCLUSION.

GOD, willing more abundantly to ſhew unto the heirs of promiſe the immutability of his counſel, confirmed it by an oath. Heb. vi. 17.

A

LETTER

TO

RICHARD NASH, Esq.

Late Maſter of the Ceremonies at Bath *.

Seek the Lord while he may be found, call upon him while he is near. Iſ. lv. 6.

SIR,

THIS comes from your ſincere friend, and one that has your beſt intereſt deeply at heart: it comes on a deſign altogether important, and of no leſs conſequence than your everlaſting happineſs; ſo that it may juſtly challenge your careful regard. It is not to upbraid or reproach, much leſs to triumph and

* Mr *Hervey* is ſuppoſed to have wrote this letter, when he was at *Bath*, in the year 1743. It was found among Mr *Naſh*'s papers after his death; and an extract of it was inſerted in an account of his death, publiſhed ſeveral years ago.—For ought appears, this man of pleaſure deſpiſed the awful warning given him by the benevolent Mr *Hervey*, and died as he had lived.

and inſult over your miſconduct: no; it is pure benevolence, it is diſintereſted good-will prompts me to write; ſo that I hope I ſhall not raiſe your reſentment: however, be the iſſue what it will, I cannot bear to ſee you walk in the paths that lead to death, without warning you of your danger; without ſounding in your ears the awful admonition, "Return and "live:—for why will you die?" I beg of you to conſider whether you do not, in ſome meaſure, reſemble thoſe accurſed children of *Eli*; whom, tho' they were famous in their generation, and men of renown, yet vengeance ſuffered not to live. For my part, I may ſafely uſe the expoſtulation of the old prieſt:—"Why do you ſuch things? for I hear of "your evil dealings by all this people: nay, my bro-"ther, for it is no good report I hear; you make the "Lord's people to tranſgreſs." I have long obſerved and pitied you; and a moſt melancholy ſpectacle I lately beheld, made me reſolve to caution you, leſt you alſo come into the ſame condemnation.

I was, not long ſince, called to viſit a poor gentleman, ere while of the moſt robuſt body, and gayeſt temper I ever knew: but when I viſited him, Oh! how was the glory departed from him! I found him no more that ſprightly and vivacious ſon of joy which he uſed to be; but languiſhing, pining away, and withering under the chaſtiſing hand of God! his limbs feeble and trembling; his countenance forlorn and ghaſtly; and the little breath he had left, ſobb'd out in ſorrowful ſighs! his body haſtening apace to the duſt, to lodge in the ſilent grave, the land of darkneſs and deſolation: his ſoul juſt going to God who gave it; preparing itſelf to wing away to its long home; to enter upon an unchangeable and eternal ſtate. When I was come up into his chamber, and had ſeated myſelf on his bed, he firſt caſt a moſt wiſh-

ful

ful look upon me; and then began, as well as he was able, to ſpeak:—"Oh! that I had been wiſe; that I "had known this; that I had conſidered my latter "end! Ah! Mr *H——y*, Death is knocking at my "doors: in a few hours more I ſhall draw my laſt "gaſp; and then judgment, the tremendous judg- "ment! How ſhall I appear, unprepared as I am, be- "fore the all-knowing and omnipotent God? how "ſhall I endure the day of his coming?" When I mentioned, among many other things, that *ſtrict holineſs*, which he had formerly ſo ſlightly eſteemed; he replied, with a haſty eagerneſs; "Oh! that *holineſs* "is the only thing I now long for: I have not words "to tell you how highly I value it: I would gladly "part with all my eſtate, large as it is, or a world, to "obtain it: now my benighted eyes are enlightened; "I clearly diſcern the things that are excellent: what "is there in the place whither I am going but God? "or, what is there to be deſired on earth but religion?" —But if this God ſhould reſtore you to health, ſaid I, think you that you would alter your former courſe? "I call heaven and earth to witneſs," ſaid he, "I "would labour for holineſs, as I ſhall ſoon labour for "life: as for riches and pleaſures, and the applauſes "of men, I account them as droſs and dung; no "more to my happineſs than the feathers that lie on "the floor. Oh! if the righteous Judge would try "me once more; if he would but reprieve and ſpare "me a little longer;—in what a ſpirit would I ſpend "the remainder of my days? I would know no "other buſineſs; aim at no other end than perfecting "myſelf in holineſs: whatever contributed to that; "every means of grace; every opportunity of ſpiri- "tual improvement, ſhould be dearer to me than "thouſands of gold and ſilver.—But alas! why do I "amuſe myſelf with fond imaginations? The beſt "reſolutions are now inſignificant, becauſe they are "too late: the day, in which I ſhould have worked,

"is

" is over and gone; and I see a sad, horrible night " approaching, bringing with it the blackness of dark- " ness for ever. Heretofore, (wo is me!) when God " called, I refused; when he invited, I was one of " them that made excuse: now, therefore, I receive " the reward of my deeds; fearfulness and trembling " are come upon me; I smart; I am in sore anguish " already; and yet this is but the beginning of sor- " rows! It doth not yet appear what I shall be;— " but sure I shall be ruined, undone, and destroyed " with an everlasting destruction."

This sad scene I saw with my eyes; these words, and many more equally affecting, I heard with my ears; and soon after attended the unhappy gentleman to his tomb. The poor breathless skeleton spoke in such an accent, and with so much earnestness, that I could not easily forget him, or his words: and as I was musing upon this sorrowful subject, I remembered Mr *Nash;*—I remembered you, Sir;—for I discerned too near an agreement and correspondence between yourself and the deceased. They are like, said I, in their ways, and what shall hinder them from being alike in their end? The course of their actions was equally full of sin and folly; and why should not the period of them be equally full of horror and distress? I am grievously afraid for the survivor, lest, as he lives the life, so he should die the death of this wretched man, and his latter end should be like his.

For this cause, therefore, I take my pen, to advise —to admonish—nay—to request of you to repent, while you have opportunity; if haply you may find grace and forgiveness: yet a moment, and you *may* die; yet a little while, and you *must* die: and will you go down with infamy and despair to the grave, rather than depart in peace, and with hopes full of immortality?

But

But I must tell you plainly, Sir, with the utmost freedom, that your present behaviour is not the way to reconcile yourself to God: you are so far from making atonement to offended justice, that you are aggravating the former account, and heaping up an increase of wrath against the day of wrath. For what say the scriptures? those books, which, at the consummation of all things, the Ancient of days shall open, —and judge you by every jot and tittle therein; what say these sacred volumes? Why, they testify and declare to every soul of man, *That whosoever liveth in pleasure is dead while he liveth:* so that, so long as you roll on in a continued circle of sensual delights, and vain entertainments, you are dead to all the purposes of piety and virtue: you are as odious to God as a corrupt carcase that lies putrefying in the churchyard: you are as far from doing your duty, or working out your salvation, or restoring yourself to the divine favour, as a heap of dry bones nailed up in a coffin is from vigour and activity.—Think, Sir, I conjure you, think upon this, if you have any inclination to escape the fire that never will be quenched. Would you be rescued from the fury and fierce anger of almighty God? would you be delivered from weeping, and wailing, and incessant gnashing of teeth? Sure you would!—Then I exhort you as a friend; I beseech you as a brother; I charge you as a messenger from the great God, in his own most solemn words: "Cast away from you your transgressions; make you "a new heart, and a new spirit; so iniquity shall not "be your ruin.

Perhaps you may be disposed to contemn this, and its serious purport, or to recommend it to your companions as a fit subject for raillery:—but let me tell you beforehand, that for this, as well as for other things, God will bring you into judgment: he sees me now write; he will observe you while you read; he

he notes down my words in his book; he will note down your conſequent procedure: ſo that not upon me, but upon your own ſelf, will the neglecting or deſpiſing my ſayings turn. "If thou be wiſe, thou "ſhalt be wiſe for thyſelf; if thou ſcorneſt, thou "alone ſhalt bear it."

Be not concerned, Sir, to know my name; it is enough that you will know this hereafter: tarry but a little, till the Lord, even the moſt mighty God, ſhall call the heaven from above, and the earth, that he may judge his people;—and then you will ſee me face to face: there ſhall I be ready, at the dreadful tribunal, to joy and rejoice with you, if you regard my admonitions, and live; or to be—what God prevent,—by inclining your heart to receive this friendly admonition.

RULES AND ORDERS

OF THE

Assembly for Christian Improvement *.

God is greatly to be feared in the assemblies of his saints; and to be had in reverence by all that are round about him. Psal. lxxxix. 7.

I.

THAT this assembly consist of no more than ten or twelve at the utmost, lest an increased number should produce confusion or dissensions; and that each member, in order to prevent any sinister reflections from the inconsiderate, or vitious, be cautious of mentioning to any others that he belongs to such † an assembly.—And that each member before he sets out, and on his return, do use the forms of prayer,

* Referred to in Mr Hervey's Life, p. xxxiii. vol. I.

† As this assembly met at different inns, public prayer would have alarmed the attendants, and caused gross misrepresentations.—Besides, the real design of this meeting was known only to a few; and the injunctions of secrecy was given to each member, in order to avoid the appearance of religious ostentation, and in compliance with the apostle's precaution, *viz. Let not your good be evil spoken of,* Rom. xiv. 16.

prayer, which are ſpecified in the MINUTES, and particularly adapted to this occaſion.

II.

That no one ſhall be admitted a member, who has not been propoſed by the chairman at the preceding aſſembly,—or who ſhall be diſapproved of by any two members on a ballot, which ſhall always be taken on ſuch occaſions, how unanimous ſoever the members may ſeem to be beforehand.

III.

That the members ſhall be regiſtered alphabetically in the MINUTES of the aſſembly's proceedings, and that the chairman of the day be appointed regularly, according to that liſt; ſo that no miſunderſtanding may ariſe about precedence; and that a treaſurer be elected annually, the firſt *Tueſday* in *January*.

IV.

That the aſſembly meet on the firſt *Tueſday* in every month during the ſummer-ſeaſon, punctually at twelve o'clock; and on the moon-light *Tueſday*, during the winter-ſeaſon, exactly at ten, at ſuch inn as ſhall from time to time be agreed on by the majority; and that dinner be ready preciſely at two in the ſummer, and one in the winter.

V.

That as ſoon as the aſſembly is met, the names of the preſent members ſhall be entered in the MINUTES, and the forfeits (if there be any due) depoſited in the charity-purſe.—After which the chairman ſhall inquire, if the prayers, as agreed upon by the aſſembly, and entered in their MINUTES, have been properly uſed by each member at his own home. Then the chairman ſhall, in a ſhort charge, or exhortation, remind his aſſociates of the importance of ſuch a meeting, and enumerate the good effects, which the ſelected chapters, if rightly improved, may produce.

VI.

The chairman ſhall then read the chapter in the Old Teſtament in *Engliſh*, and ſhall pauſe at the end of every verſe, that any one who pleaſes may make ſuch inquiries and reflections, as may occaſionally ariſe; but that no two perſons ſpeak at a time; and if two accidentally begin, the chairman ſhall direct which is to go on.—And that every member ſhall, againſt the next meeting, ſend to the chairman whatever obſervation of his on the chapter of the day the members then preſent had deſired to have entered in their MINUTES: by which method, many uſeful obſervations may be preſerved: And in caſe any verſe ſhall not be cleared of its difficulties to the ſatisfaction of the preſent members, the ſaid verſe ſhall be re-conſidered at the next meeting.

VII.

At three o'clock preciſely, during the ſummer-ſeaſon, (no more than an hour being allowed for dining,) the chairman ſhall proceed in reading a chapter in *Greek* out of the New Teſtament, to be commented on in like manner as that out of the Old. But in the winter-ſeaſon, when the aſſembly meet at ten, the chapter both in the Old as well as the New Teſtament ſhall be read before dinner; and after dinner no other buſineſs, than that ſpecified in the ninth article, ſhall be entered on.

VIII.

That the two chapters to be conſidered by the aſſembly at their next meeting, be previouſly appointed before the adjournment of every aſſembly, either by the ſucceeding chairman, if preſent, or in caſe of his abſence, by the majority; of which chapters the abſent members ſhall have timely notice ſent them in writing.

IX.

That at every meeting (as time permits) each member, in an alphabetical order, ſhall be deſired to give

an

an account of ſome religious author (which he has read in the preceding month) in as conciſe and ſuccinct a manner as poſſible.

X.

That, at every meeting, half a crown ſhall be given by each member for charitable uſes; and that, at the end of the year, the money ſhall be expended in clothing or educating ſuch poor perſons, or relieving ſuch incurables, as the members in their alphabetical order ſhall recommend to the aſſembly.

XI.

That every member who is abſent, though occaſioned by the moſt urgent buſineſs, or even indiſpoſition, (unleſs ſuch indiſpoſition ſhall continue longer than a month,) ſhall pay half a crown towards the charity-purſe, and one ſhilling and ſixpence towards the dinner, in the ſame manner as if he had been preſent.

XII.

That the aſſembly break * up by ſeven in the ſummer, and by four in the winter; and that each member, on his return home, uſe the form of prayer which is ſpecified in our MINUTES, and peculiarly adapted to this occaſion.

WE whoſe names are underwritten, have this day (being the ſeventh day of *July* 1747) ſubſcribed our aſſent to theſe rules and orders, as witneſs our hands.

The

* Some of the members lived five or ſix miles from the place of meeting, which was always at public houſes, and as near the centre of each member's reſidence as could be conveniently contrived.

The FORM of PRAYER composed by Mr *Hervey*, to be used by each member before setting out for the ASSEMBLY.

Lord, thou hast said; Where two or three are gathered together in thy name, there am I in the midst of them. Matth. xviii. 20.

ALmighty and immortal God, Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, and through him the God of all mercies, vouchsafe, we beseech thee, to look down upon us thy sinful servants, who are preparing to meet together in thy name, and with an humble desire to build up one another in our most holy religion. Pardon all our iniquities through the blood of the everlasting covenant, and make us and our services accepted through the Beloved. O heavenly Father, unite us to one another by mutual love, and to thy blessed self by faith unfeigned. Enlighten our minds with the knowledge of thy truth, and sanctify our hearts by the power of thy grace. Direct our counsels, and prosper all our endeavours, to the glory of thy divine Majesty, and the salvation of our own, and the souls of others.—Grant this, most gracious God, through the precious death, and never-ceasing intercession of Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen!*

The FORM of PRAYER composed by Mr *Hervey*, to be used by each member when returned from the ASSEMBLY.

Lord, thou hast said, If two of you shall agree on earth, as touching any thing that ye shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father which is in heaven. Matth. xviii. 19.

O Lord God of our salvation, thou Giver of every good and perfect gift, we adore thy glorious name

name and beneficence, for the redemption of our souls by Jesus Christ, and for all thy other unnumbered and undeserved mercies. In a particular manner, we praise thy unspeakable goodness, for the valuable opportunity we have this day enjoyed, of provoking one another to love, and to good works. Pity our infirmities, most merciful Father, and pardon whatever thou hast seen amiss in the tenor of our conversation, or in the spirit of our minds.—Sanctify, we humbly beseech thee, thy holy word, which we have heard. Command it to sink deep into our souls, and to be a lively and lasting principle of godliness in our hearts. O! let us, by every such conference, grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ: that, through thy infinitely-precious favour, we may become stedfast in faith, joyful through hope, and rooted in charity; and so much the more, as we see the day approaching.—And forasmuch as we are now separated into a world, where wickedness abounds, preserve us, O God, our defence, from the least infection, and from every appearance of evil. Inspire us with wisdom, so to order our conversation, that we may give no just occasion of offence in any thing. Endue us with holiness, that we may adorn the gospel of God our Saviour in all things; and animate us with such a steady and well-tempered zeal, that neither the slothfulness of our nature, nor the fear of the world may with-hold us from pursuing such courses, as may be conducive to the glory of thy blessed name, the advancement of true religion, and the salvation of our immortal souls.—This, and whatsoever else is needful for us, and for carrying on the work which thou hast given us to do, we humbly beg, for the sake of Jesus Christ our only Mediator, and all-sufficient Redeemer. *Amen.*

RULES

Rules * *and orders of a religious ſociety, conſiſting of two claſſes*, viz.

Of men into which no woman can be admitted: And,
Of married men, their wives, and other women; into which no unmarried man can be admitted.

Each claſs meets every other week alternately.

RULE I.

AS the ſole deſign of this ſociety is to promote real holineſs in heart and life, every member of it is to have this continually in view, truſting in the divine power, and gracious conduct of his Holy Spirit, through our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, to excite, advance, and perfect all good in us.

RULE II.

That in order to the being of one heart, and one mind, and to prevent all things which gender ſtrifes; as well as to remove all occaſion of offence from being taken againſt this ſociety, no perſon is to be admitted a member or allowed to continue ſuch, who is a member of any other meeting, or follows any other preaching than that of the eſtabliſhed miniſtry of the church of *England*.—That none be members but ſuch as attend the ſacrament every month, and that no perſon be at any

* As the plan and proceedings of this ſociety, ſo much commended by Mr *Hervey*, may probably be extenſively uſeful; it is here printed from a private copy, by the particular deſire of ſeveral of Mr *Hervey*'s friends; and it is hoped the worthy director and members of the ſociety at *Truro*, will excuſe the liberty here taken without their knowledge, when they conſider the good effects which may probably ariſe from this publication. *See Mr Hervey's letters, let.* 132. *vol.* VI.

any time introduced except by request of the director.

RULE III.

That no person be admitted a member but upon the recommendation of the director, with the consent of the majority of members then present.—And that the * director be the Reverend Mr *Walker*.

RULE IV.

That the members of this society meet together one evening in a week at a convenient place, and that they go home at nine o'clock.—And that all matters of business be done before the sentences begin.

RULE V.

That every member give constant attendance, and be present at the hour of meeting precisely.—And that whoever absents himself four meetings together, without giving a satisfactory account to the director, which shall by him be communicated to the society, shall be looked upon as disaffected to the society.

RULE VI.

That, to prevent confusion, no person be removed from this society but by the director, who shall be present on such occasions.—That any member do beforehand apply to the director, in case he judges such removal necessary.—That a disorderly † carriage, or a proud

* This society is very happy in having so accomplished a person at their head.—But where such a one cannot be had, perhaps it would be prudent to elect a director annually, whose office might be continued more or less number of years, as seemed best for the general good.

† By a disorderly carriage we mean, not only the gross commission of scandalous sins, but also what are esteemed matters of little moment in the eyes of the world; such as a light use of the words, *Lord*, *God*, *Jesus*, &c. in ordinary conversation; which we cannot but interpret as an evidence of want of God's presence in the heart.—The doing needless business on the Lord's day.—The frequenting alehouses or taverns without necessary business.

proud, contentious, disputing temper, (the greatest adversary to Christian love and peace,) be sufficient ground for such complaint and removal.

RULE VII.

That all the members, considering the sad consequences of vanity and amusements over the nation, do, in charity to the souls of others, as well as to avoid the danger of such things themselves, look upon themselves as obliged to use peculiar caution, with respect to many of the usual amusements, however innocent they may be, or be thought in themselves; such as cards, dancings, clubs for entertainment, playhouses, sports at festivals and parish-feasts, and, as much as may be, parish-feasts themselves;—lest by joining herein they should be a hindrance to themselves, or their neighbours.

RULE VIII.

That, with the consent of the director, the major part of the society have power to make a new order when need requires, but that the proposal for this purpose be made by the director.—And that any member may consult the director hereupon before the day of meeting.

RULE IX.

That persons disposed to become members of this society, must first be proposed by the director, in order that the members of the society may observe their conduct for the space of three months before admittance.

RULE X.

That every member do consider himself as peculiarly obliged to live in an inoffensive and orderly manner, to the glory of God and the edifying his neighbours. —That he study to advance in himself and others, humility, faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, love to God, gospel-repentance, and new obedience; wherein Christian

Christian edification consists.—And that, in all his conversation hereupon, he stick close to the plain and obvious sense of the holy scriptures, carefully avoiding all niceties and refinements upon them.

RULE XI.

That these orders shall be read over at least four times in the year by the director; and that with such deliberation, that each member may have time to examine himself by them.

RULE XII.

That the members of this society do meekly and humbly join together in the following offices of devotion.

The office of devotion used weekly at the meeting of the society.

The director shall read these sentences, himself and every one standing.

GOD is greatly to be feared in the assemblies of his saints, and to be had in reverence by all that are round about him. *Psal.* lxxxix. 7.

God is a righteous judge, strong and patient, and God is provoked every day. *Psal.* vii. 12.

God will bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil. *Eccles.* xii. 14.

He that hideth his sins shall not prosper; but he that confesseth and forsaketh them, shall have mercy. *Prov.* xxviii. 13.

If any man sinneth, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous, and he is the propitiation for our sins. 1 *John* ii. 1, 2.

O come let us worship, and fall down, and kneel before the Lord our Maker. *Psal.* xcv. 5, 6.

Then

Then shall be said these three collects, all kneeling:

"Prevent us, O Lord," &c.

"Blessed Lord, who hast caused all holy scrip-
"tures," &c.

"O God, for as much as without thee," &c.

All seating themselves, a portion of scripture shall be read. Then kneeling down, they shall join in this confession of sin:

"Almighty God, Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,
"Maker of all things, Judge of all men," &c.

"Our Father, which art," &c.

After which the director alone shall say:

"Almighty and everlasting God, who hatest no-
"thing that thou hast made," &c.

O most holy and blessed God! the Creator, Governor, and Judge of all; who hatest falsehood and hypocrisy, and wilt not accept the prayer of feigned lips; but hast promised to shew mercy to such as turn unto thee by true faith and repentance; vouchsafe, we pray thee, to create in us clean and upright hearts, through an unfeigned faith in thy Son our Saviour. To us indeed belongeth shame and confusion of face; we are not worthy to lift up our eyes or our voice towards heaven; our natures are depraved, and our ways have been perverse before thee. O let not thy wrath rise against us, lest we be consumed in a moment; but let thy merciful bowels yearn over us, and vouchsafe to purify and pardon us, through thine all-sufficient grace and mercy in our Lord Jesus Christ: since it hath pleased thee to offer him up as a sacrifice for sinners, vouchsafe, we beseech thee, to cleanse us from all iniquity through his blood. We believe, that he is able to save to the uttermost those that come unto thee by him, and we do earnestly desire to embrace him as our Prince and Saviour; O give us repentance and remission of sin through his name. All we like

sheep

ſheep have gone aſtray, every one in his own way; good Lord, reduce us into thy fold through this great Shepherd of ſouls, and be pleaſed to lay on him the iniquity of us all. And as we have much to be forgiven, be pleaſed to incline our hearts to love thee much, who forgiveſt iniquity, tranſgreſſion, and ſin. Give us that faith, that worketh by love; and ſuch love as will conſtrain us to have regard to all thy commandments. And make us to look carefully to all our ways, that we may never again do any thing, whereby thy holy name may be blaſphemed, or thine authority deſpiſed.

Give us the deepeſt humility, without which we can never be accepted of thee; our infinitely condeſcending God, make us continually to tread in the ſteps of our bleſſed Lord and Saviour Jeſus Chriſt; being of a meek and quiet ſpirit, always influenced by the higheſt love of thee our God, and by the moſt charitable diſpoſition towards all men.

Vouchſafe to endue us with the ſaving knowledge of ſpiritual things, that we may receive all thy truths in the love of them, in all patience, purity, juſtice, temperance, godlineſs, and brotherly kindneſs; that we may adorn our holy profeſſion, and reſemble the divine goodneſs of thee our heavenly Father.—And ſince we are not only weak and frail, but corrupt and ſinful, vouchſafe, O Lord, to keep us by the power of thy Holy Spirit, that we fall not from our avowed ſtedfaſtneſs, in all Chriſtian duty. Preſerve us from all the ſin and vanity to which our age, condition, and nature are prone, and to which the devil and this world may at any time tempt us.

Glorify, good God, thy ſtrength in our weakneſs, thy grace in our pollution, and thy mercy in our ſalvation. May our holy religion be grounded and ſettled in our hearts, that, out of the good treaſure of a gracious heart, our ſpeech may be ſavoury, and our converſation exemplary; that we may be fruitful in

all

all good works, even to our old age, and to our laſt day.

Fit us, we pray thee, for every ſtate of life, into which thy providence ſhall caſt us; proſper our lawful undertakings; preſerve us night and day, and prepare us for an hopeful death and a bleſſed eternity.

Be pleaſed, we beſeech thee, to bleſs all thoſe ſocieties, who in truth apply their hearts to thy ſervice and glory; we pray thee be pleaſed to ſtrengthen, eſtabliſh, and ſettle both them and us, in thy holy faith, fear, and love. Let nothing in this world diſcourage us from the purſuit of thoſe holy purpoſes, which thy Spirit hath at any time put into our hearts and minds. But make us all faithful to thee our avowed God and deſired portion, even unto death; that we, at leaſt, (with thy whole church,) may be partakers of that eternal life and perfect bliſs which thou haſt promiſed through Jeſus Chriſt, thy only begotten Son, our Mediator and Redeemer. Amen.

" Almighty and ever-living God, who, by thy holy " apoſtle, has taught us to make prayers," *&c.*

Then all ſtanding up, a pſalm ſhall be ſung, and * *a ſermon read, or a charge given by the director. After which ſome ſuitable prayer ſhall be uſed as he ſhall judge fit.*

Then all ſtanding up, this exhortation to humility ſhall be read.

My brethren, ſince the great God has often aſſured us in his holy word, " that he will reſiſt the proud, " and give grace unto the humble," *Jam.* iv. 6. 1 *Pet.* v. 5. let us conſider, that all our undertakings, though ever ſo good, will fail and come to nought, unleſs we be truly and deeply humble, *Luke* xiv. 11. Indeed it cannot be otherwiſe; becauſe the proud perſon quits

* The director, when abroad or indiſpoſed, is to appoint what ſermon ſhall be read, and by whom.

quits his reliance on God to reſt in himſelf; which is to exchange a rock for a reed.

Alas! what are we, poor empty nothings! *Gen.* xxxii. 10. Yea, what is worſe, we are condemned, periſhing ſinners! We have, perhaps, underſtanding now; but God can ſoon turn it into madneſs, *Dan.* iv. 42. We may have ſome attainments in grace; but ſpiritual pride will wither all, and ſoon reduce us to a very profligate and wretched eſtate, *Iſ.* lxvi. 2. ſuch as we have ſeen others fall into who have begun in the Spirit, and ended in the fleſh! What have we, that we have not received? 1 *Cor.* iv. 7. And even that, he who gave it may as ſoon take away.

Ye that are young in years and younger in grace, 1 *Tim.* iii. 6. are in danger of ſelf-conceit, and of being puffed up; which is a quick-ſand, in which thouſands have been ſwallowed up and periſhed. It is not in vain that the apoſtle requires, "that young men "be exhorted to be ſober-minded," *Tit.* ii. 6. *Prov.* xvi. 18. which he elſewhere explains, when he ſays, "Let no man think of himſelf more highly than he "ought to think; but to think ſoberly," *Rom.* xii. 3. *Iſ.* xiv. 12, 13.

By pride the angels fell from heaven, 1 *Tim.* iii. 6. and if ever we climb up to thoſe bleſſed ſeats from which they are fallen, it muſt be by the gracious ſteps of humility and lowlineſs of mind, *Luke* xviii. 14. "Wherefore let him that thinketh he ſtandeth, take "heed leſt he fall," 1 *Cor.* x. 12. "Let us walk "humbly with our God," and ever have lowly thoughts of our vile ſelves, *Rom.* xi. 20. and of our poor attainments, and of our defective performances: and with St *Paul* (who was nothing behind the very chiefeſt apoſtles) let us always ſay, I am nothing, 2 *Cor.* xii. 11.

Let us therefore now ſing to the praiſe and glory of God, to whom alone praiſe is due.

A

A pſalm being ſung, the director ſhall ſay,
" It is very meet and right," *&c.*
All ſhall join.
" Therefore with angels and archangels," *&c.*
The director alone.
" May the grace of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt," *&c.* Amen.

Conſiderations laid before the members of the ſociety; being the ſubſtance of the firſt charge, or exhortation, ſpoke at its opening by the director.

BRETHREN,

YOU expect that I lay before you the deſign of this ſociety, and give you ſome cautions concerning it. The deſign is threefold; 1. To glorify God. 2. To be quickened and confirmed ourſelves. 3. To render us more uſeful among our neighbours.

I.

As a ſociety, we ſhall be better able to glorify God; for hereby we bear a more evident teſtimony to the cauſe of Chriſt, and make a more avowed confeſſion of him and his words, in theſe evil days, than we could do when ſeparate.

Every one of you deſires that the kingdom of Jeſus Chriſt were more eſtabliſhed, and more honourable in the world than it is, and you join your hand, with others, to promote ſo deſirable an end.

Take theſe cautions for this purpoſe:

1. Look upon yourſelf as one aſſociated with others in vindication of your Maſter's honour.

2. Never be aſhamed of him, or his doctrine, or of this ſociety.

3. Demean yourſelf to every one as his diſciple, by walking in humility, meekneſs, heavenly-mindedneſs, charity after Chriſt's example.

4. Keep

4. Keep yourself heedfully from all things which may disgrace your Master, and this society; such as pride in a conceit of your knowledge or attainments, or that you are a member of this society.—Valuing yourself upon any distinction in station or wealth.—Sinking into a worldly frame,—or declining into sloth and idleness.—Practising the least dishonesty, or conniving at the dishonesty of others.—Making compliances to avoid shame, or promote worldly interest.—Falling into lukewarmness, and forgetting your first love.—Slighting public ordinances.

5. Often (especially before and after great trials) reflect, that you belong to a religious society for promoting the glory of Christ.

II.

The second design of this society is, to be quickened and confirmed ourselves. For hereby we shall be better able to maintain the war against our enemies, (especially the world,) and to grow in grace; seeing, by this association, we have the Spirit to bless our exercises;—shall have the benefit of mutual advice * and reproof;—shall be more hardy to oppose the temptations besetting us in this wicked world;—shall walk under a peculiar restraint, as being members of a religious society;—and shall be assisted by the prayers, as of one another, so of all good men in the whole Christian church. To this end,

1. Watch over one another in love.

2. Be willing to hear of your faults, and of the fears and suspicions of these your friends concerning you.

3. Be watchful against any disgust to one another; and if any arises in you, without delay tell the party, and if that avail not, tell the director.

4. Desire the prayers one of another, and pray for one another.

5. Be

* There is a most useful little piece for these purposes, entitled, *Regulations and helps for promoting religious conversation among Christians.*

5. Be ſure you reſt not on your being a member of this ſociety;—ſeeking continually to caſt off all ſelf-dependence.

6. Watch the leaſt decay of love to Chriſt, or zeal for his honour and the good of ſouls.

7. Confirm continually upon your heart the obligations you lie under as a member of a religious ſociety.

III.

The third deſign of this ſociety is, to render us more uſeful among our neighbours.—Hereby we are more obſervable.—People will not be ſo eaſily quiet in their ſins.—Good examples carry a brighter and more convincing light, confounding the works of darkneſs. To this end,

1. Be careful to ſet a Chriſtian example before the world.

2. Think not to gain any by making compliances.

3. Diſcountenance all ſuch things as you ſee prejudicial to others, ſuch as taverns, alehouſes, gaming, and many ſports which are deſtructive to ſouls.

4. Shew all love to mens ſouls and bodies.

5. Avoid all diſputings which proceed from pride, and nurſe contention and variance.

6. Don't be angry with thoſe who blame this ſociety, but meekly and ſilently bear with them.

7. Don't in your heart deſpiſe others, becauſe they are not members of this ſociety;

8. Nor ſhew any valuing of yourſelves becauſe you are.—Never ſpeak of yourſelf as a member, unleſs with a view of doing good to others.

MOTIVES.

1. Real diſciples do more than nominal profeſſors.
2. The Spirit will ſtrengthen and comfort you.
3. You will have the bleſſing of a quiet conſcience.
4. You are engaged in the moſt honourable ſervice.
5. You will promote the intereſt of your Maſter.

6. He

6. He will acknowledge your labours in the day of his appearing. *Amen.* So be it.

N. B. Whereas too many people are apt to misrepresent every religious society as a methodistical meeting; it was judged necessary to insert the following extract from the celebrated Mr *Dodd*'s late sermon: "The cry of *Methodism* is frequently raised by such "as are totally ignorant of the nature of the accusa- "tion; and many are stigmatized with the name, "who are perfectly innocent of the thing. The ob- "servations I have made may possibly serve to settle "the point in some degree, or at least to stop the "tongues of those who very unjustly cast the asper- "sion, where there is not the least cause: and it de- "serves, perhaps, to be considered by all serious and "sincere Protestants, whether the affixing the charge "of *Methodism*, &c. &c. indiscriminately upon men "of unblameable lives, and irreproachable conversa- "tion, may not tend greatly to prejudise our holy "faith in general, and to bring a reproach upon Chris- "tianity itself, through the pretended offence of "*Methodism:* this may be a triumph to the *Deist* and "*Papist* equally pleasing.—And, if so, can we be too "accurate in our distinctions, or too cautious in our "imputations?—Remembering, that while we con- "found Christianity and Methodism, we are doing "discredit to Christianity in the same proportion as "we are giving weight and dignity to Methodism." See Mr *Dodd*'s excellent sermon, entitled, *Unity recommended*, preached before the religious societies in and about *London*, at their annual meeting in the parish-church of *St Mary-le-Bow*, on Easter *Monday* 1759; to which is added, an Appendix, giving an account of the original design, general rules, and present state of the religious societies.—A farther account of which may be seen in a little piece wrote in Queen *Anne*'s time, by the Rev. Dr *Josiah Woodward*, entitled, *An*

account of the rise and progress of the religious societies in and about London, and of their endeavours for the reformation of manners.—The sixth edition. In this little tract the most considerable objections against religious societies are fully answered.

HINTS *concerning the means of promoting* RELIGION *in ourselves or others* *.

I.

BE always chearful as well as serious, that you may win men to Christianity. And in every conversation introduce some religious hints, if it can be done with propriety.

II.

Avoid all controversies; no good can come from disputing; but contend earnestly for the essentials of Christianity.

III.

Heal all divisions among sects and parties to the utmost of your power.—And prevail with those who are most fiery, to read *Henry*'s excellent treatise on *meekness*.

IV.

Talk *familiarly* to children about religion, as a delightful employment. Put easy questions to them,—encouraging them occasionally by some little presents,—and thus teaching them an amiable, chearful, generous piety.

V.

Make it a constant rule to pray for all who affront or injure you.—Christ enjoins us to pray for all who despitefully use us. See *Matth.* v. 44. Disregard all opprobrious names.—Christ himself (as will every one who strives against the corrupt prejudices and vices of mankind) was abused as a wine-bibber, and even a blasphemer, *&c.*

VI.

* Referred to in Mr Hervey's life, p. xxxvi. vol. I.

VI.

Be accuſtomed to a regular, daily, but moderate courſe of devout retirement: and recommend interceſſion for others, both in the family and in private; as likewiſe frequent attendance on the ſacrament.

VII.

Frequent public worſhip every day in the week, if your buſineſs permit, and if you live in a place where it is performed.

VIII.

Secret ejaculations too may be uſed as you are walking, or riding, or in whatever company you may happen to be;—and, on *ſome particular* hour, remember (as for inſtance, at morning, noon, afternoon, or evening, when your TOWN-CLOCK ſtrikes, which will be a loud and never-failing memorandum) to ſet yourſelf as in the preſence of God * for a few minutes.

IX.

* This method is thus recommended by the late Biſhop of *Durham* (Dr *Butler*, in his *charge* to the clergy, 1751.) "Secret prayer, as expreſsly as it is commanded by our Saviour, "and as evidently as it is implied in the notion of piety, will "yet I fear be grievouſly forgotten by the generality, till they "can be brought to fix for themſelves certain times of the day "for it. Secret prayer comprehends not only devotions be"fore men begin, and after they have ended the buſineſs of "the day, but ſuch alſo as may be performed while they are "employed in it, or even in company.

"And truly, if, beſides our more ſet devotions morning and "evening, all of us would fix upon certain times of the day, "ſo that the return of the hour ſhould remind us, to ſay ſhort, "prayers, or exerciſe our thoughts in a way equivalent to "this, perhaps there are few perſons in ſo high and habitual "a ſtate of piety, as not to find the benefit of it.—If it took "up no more than a minute or two, or even leſs time than "that, it would ſerve the end I am propoſing:—it would be "a recollection THAT WE ARE IN THE DIVINE PRESENCE, "and contribute to our *being in the fear of the Lord all the "day long.*

"A duty of the like kind, and ſerving to the ſame purpoſe,

"is

IX.

Uſe frequent meditation; than which nothing can be more profitable: Nor can any thing ſo much awaken and diſpoſe us for that, and for all that is good, as a ſtrong faith in providence, and a conſtant chearfulneſs * of ſpirit.

X.

Entertain the higheſt regard for the word of God, and furniſh yourſelf with a few of the beſt writers, but particularly with *Henry* on *meekneſs*, and *Worthington* on *reſignation*.—Study them thoroughly, and endeavour to make their ſentiments your own. Meekneſs and reſignation are the two principal duties of a Chriſtian.—Diſperſe good books occaſionally, if your circumſtances will permit;—and be very careful in the choice of them, and in adapting them to the circumſtances of the perſon to whom they are given.

XI.

" is the particular acknowledgment of God, when we are par-
" taking of his bounty at our meals.—The neglect of this is
" ſaid to have been ſcandalous to a proverb, in the Heathen *
" world; but it is frequently and without ſhame laid aſide at
" the tables of the higheſt, and the loweſt ranks among us."

* In order to obtain a proper confidence in providence, and a ſettled chearfulneſs of mind, the reader (eſpecially the gloomy and diſpirited) would be much aſſiſted by Biſhop *Patrick*'s *advice to a friend*, which is a moſt ineſtimable little piece.—It was firſt wrote (as the preface tells us) to preſerve a pious friend in peace and chearfulneſs; but if the advice be good, the more public it is made the better. It was contracted into a little room, that it might be as eaſy to carry in the mind, as in the pocket;—and is a moſt excellent guide to peace, chearfulneſs, and whatſoever is graceful, amiable, and deſirable in a Chriſtian.—They who are offended at the uncomfortableneſs of a religious life, never yet knew the true way of religion, into which this author will lead them.—*Her ways* (ſays *Solomon*) *are ways of pleaſantneſs, and all her paths are peace.*—See likewiſe *Henry*'s *Pleaſantneſs of a religious life.*

* *See* Caſaubon in Athenæum, lib. i. cap. ii. pag. 22.

XI.

Encourage by your influence, and purſe too (if able,) ſocieties for promoting the goſpel, both at home and in foreign parts; and, in order to be well acquainted with theſe, read the celebrated Dr *Woodward*'s *riſe and progreſs of the religious ſocieties in* London *and* Weſtminiſter.

XII.

Whenever you reprove, let it be tenderly, privately, and with all due humility.

XIII.

For the reformation of ſwearing *, lying, ſlandering, Sabbath-breaking, paſſionate †, or unchaſte ‡ perſons,

* *Hints* for the reformation of, or converſation with a ſwearer.

1. None ſo ignorant as not to know 'tis a breach of the third commandment.—2. He who lives in the fear of God, is ſo far from being capable of it, that it ſhocks him to hear others offending this way.—3. We are taught by Chriſt daily to pray, "Hallowed be thy name." Angels praiſe it, and devils tremble at it.—4. Chriſt enjoins us to ſwear not at all. See *Matth.* v. 34. and alſo *James* v. 12. —5. Give to a ſwearer Dr *Woodward*'s *kind caution to profane ſwearers*, or the late Biſhop of *London*'s (Dr. *Gibſon*) *admonition againſt prophane and common ſwearing*.

† *Hints* for the reformation of a paſſionate man.

1. Cauſeleſs and immoderate anger, proceeds from a proud and haughty temper, and is contrary to goſpel-meekneſs—that meekneſs and quietneſs of ſpirit, which, as St *Peter* aſſures us, 1 *Pet.* iii. 4. is of great price in the ſight of God.—2. Chriſt bids us learn of him, who was lowly and meek, *Matth.* xi. 9. —3. Every paſſionate tongue is ſet on fire by hell, ſee *James* iii. 6. —4. He who ſays the Lord's prayer with an unforgiving temper, curſes himſelf.—5. No one has offended us ſo often as we have offended God, therefore our anger ſhould be againſt our own ſins —6. Let all bitterneſs (ſays the apoſtle,) and wrath, and anger be put away.—In patience poſſeſs ye your ſouls, *Luke* xxi. 19.—No paſſion in heaven, therefore no paſſion in a heavenly mind.—Give to a paſſionate man *Henry* on *meekneſs*.

‡ *Hints* for the reformation of an unchaſte perſon.

1. Contrary to the ſeventh commandment of the great God,

ſons, you may write out (or keep by you ſome printed) hints on ſlips of paper, againſt either of theſe vices, and place them in the way of ſuch perſons, either by putting them into their books, windows, or other places, provided you don't care to give them to the perſon yourſelf;—or they may be ſent by the poſt * from or to the metropolis.

XIV.

Make it a rule to have *at leaſt one* religious ſentence in the letters you write to your relations or friends, when

God.—2. A ſin which defiles the ſoul, and brings it under the dominion of the flethly appetites. No ſpiritual life in ſuch a one, ſee *Rom.* xiii. 6. —3. A partaker of other people's ſins, —making them partakers of yours,—thus doubly guilty.—4. All adulterers, fornicators, and unclean perſons, are declared to have no inheritance in the kingdom of God, ſee *Cor.* vi. 9. —5. You are a ſervant of ſin, and in bondage to the deepeſt corruption.—6. If you ſin in any of theſe ways, you ſin againſt your own body, and pollute the temple of the Holy Ghoſt.—Being joined to an harlot, the Holy Spirit dwells not there.—7. We muſt glorify God both in body and ſpirit, preſenting ourſelves a living ſacrifice, holy and acceptable unto God, ſee *Rom.* xii. 1. —8. Purity and chaſtity required in the goſpel;—even impure and luſtful deſires are *there* condemned, ſee *Matth.* v. 28.—Give to an unchaſte perſon *Jenks's glorious victory of chaſtity*, or Dr *Woodward's exhortation to chaſtity*.

☞ Theſe *hints* may be very much improved, and are extracted (merely as ſpecimens) from Mr *Richards's hints for religious converſation*; where likewiſe may be found ſuch hints for converſation on moſt other vices, as will aſſiſt perſons of weak memories who are deſirous of converſing religiouſly with the vitious, or reproving them, either by letter or perſonally, as opportunity may offer.

* The following letter was ſent by the poſt to a Deiſt, and had a very good effect.

SIR,

Though you diſbelieve Chriſtianity, I cannot ſuppoſe that you diſbelieve a future ſtate of rewards and puniſhments: pleaſe therefore to take it into ſerious conſideration, whether you

when it can be *conveniently* introduced; as such a sentence *properly* interwoven, often strikes a person; and is productive of more real good, perhaps, than a laboured discourse from the pulpit, or formal advice at home.

XV.

Guard people, as much as in you lyes, against enthusiasm, and excessive rigours, either as to abstinence, retirement, or conversation; and advise them to take all the comfort that the situation in which God has placed them will conveniently admit of; reminding them, at the same time, to acknowledge him in all their ways, and to be *discreetly* * zealous for the honour of Christ.—Reposing an entire confidence in the wisdom, power, and goodness of God; and assuring themselves of the extent of his Providence (of which we know not either the value or power) to all his creatures, and to all their actions.

XVI.

But, above all, write down the reasons which at any time make you afraid to die, and then endeavour, by faith, by prayer, and by conversation with experienced Christians, to remove the causes;—and thus be properly preparing for death: And, if your time and capacity will admit, keep a DIARY; particularly note your sins of omission,—and, by this method, you will see your progress or declension in religion.

MANY

you think your actions are such, as will, upon your own principles, stand the test at the great day of account.

As it highly becomes us to do what good we can while we live in this world; and as I am truly concerned for you, I take the liberty of giving this friendly hint; and hope you will receive it as a proof, that the writer, though unknown, is

Your very sincere well-wisher

A. Z.

* A certain zealot being warned against injuring the cause of Christ by his imprudencies, despised the caution, and alledged, that PRUDENCE was "at best but a *rascally* virtue."

MANY made righteous by the Obedience of ONE.

TWO SERMONS, preached at BIDDEFORD, DEVON, in the year 1743.

With a PREFACE, by AUGUSTUS TOPLADY, A.B. Vicar of *Broad Hembury*, *Devon*.

To the READER.

THE following ſermons have been judged too excellent to be ſuppreſſed. They were preached, according to the beſt information, at *Biddeford*, in the year 1743.

As to their *authenticity*, they carry in themſelves the ſtrongeſt internal evidences of their being genuine. Whoever reads them, will know who wrote them. "Celebrated writers," as this excellent author obſerves * elſewhere, "have a ſtyle peculiar to themſelves." This was eminently true of himſelf. His performances (ſome of his *letters* excepted, written in the younger part of life) are indeed *as apples of gold in pictures of ſilver*: tranſmitting the moſt precious truths, through the channel of the moſt elegant, correct

* Meditations, vol. I. p. 261. note.

rect expreſſion; and adorning the doctrines of GOD our SAVIOUR, with all the heightening graces of exquiſite compoſition. When *Hervey*'s pencil gives the drapery, TRUTH is ſure never to ſuffer, by appearing in an ill dreſs. His proſe is, in general, more lovely and harmonious, more chaſtely refined, and more delicately beautiful, than half the real poems in the world.—With *Hervey* in their hands, his delighted readers well nigh find themſelves at a loſs, which they ſhall moſt admire; the ſublimity and ſweetneſs of the bleſſed truths he conveys, or the charming felicity of their conveyance.—There is, if the term may be allowed, a ſort of *family-likeneſs*, diſcernable in all this author's pieces. You diſcover the lively ſignatures of the parent, in every one of his offspring. They not only carry the ſuperſcription of his name, but likewiſe bear the image of his genius, and are himſelf at ſecond-hand.—Among others, the enſuing performance may be conſidered as a tranſparent medium, a ſcreen of cryſtal, through which the original writer is diſtinctly ſeen, and known from every other: A circumſtance, which, with me, has more convincing weight, than the extrinſic atteſtation of a thouſand witneſſes.

The copy, from which theſe ſermons are printed, was lately tranſmitted to me, for publication, by a moſt valued friend, of *Exeter*. I deem it a particular happineſs, that ſo choice a treaſure ſhould paſs, through *my* unworthy hands, to the church of GOD. And I rejoice the rather, as I have, by this means, an opportunity of doing myſelf the honour to bear the moſt open and public teſtimony to that grand, fundamental, ineſtimable doctrine of a ſinner's FULL, FREE, AND FINAL JUSTIFICATION, BY THE ALONE OBEDIENCE AND SACRIFICE of JESUS CHRIST THE RIGHTEOUS.

I ſhall not detain the evangelical reader from this feaſt any longer, than juſt to aſſure him, that neither my

excellent friend, who communicated the copy to me; nor myself, who communicate it to the world; propose to ourselves any sort of pecuniary advantage, from this publication; nor will we accept of any, should the sale be ever so great.

Respect for the memory of that holy man of GOD who preached these sermons, and an hope of their being made useful to such as read them, were the motives which induced us to send them abroad.—One would wish to *gather up the* very *fragments that remain* of so distinguished a writer; and *that nothing* so apparently calculated for general benefit, might *be lost*.

I thought it necessary to add two or three occasional notes; of whose propriety the reader will judge for himself.

WESTMINSTER,
July 8. 1769.

AUGUSTUS TOPLADY.

*** *The two following sermons would have fallen to be annexed to Mr* Hervey's *five sermons, in the preceding part of this volume, had they been published before these sermons were printed off.*

SER-

SERMON I.

ROMANS V. 19.

By the OBEDIENCE *of* ONE *shall* MANY *be made* RIGHTEOUS.

BY the works of the law shall no man living be justified, was, not long ago, the subject of a public discourse; and, I hope, has frequently been the subject of our private consideration.—O, that the important truth may be written most intelligibly upon our hearts, and beget in us a sound humility, and an evangelical poverty of spirit!—We then pulled up the *wrong* foundation, and, now, permit me to establish the *right*.—We then warned you of the *sandy* foundation; and, now, permit me to lead you to the *Rock* of ages; where you may safely repose all your confidences, and build, with the utmost security, for a blissful eternity. This is pointed out in the scripture before us; which, though concise in its expressions, is rich and copious in its meanings, and breathes the very spirit of the gospel.

By the obedience of ONE *shall* MANY *be made righteous*. The ONE mentioned in the text, is *the man* CHRIST JESUS. The *obedience* spoken of, includes both his *active* and *passive obedience;* the *labours* of his life, and the *agonies* of his death: all which he *exercised* and *suffered*, in conformity to his Father's will, for the sake of fallen men; that they, by HIS righteousness, might be made righteous; that, having these credentials, they may be admitted into the court of heaven, and, carrying this passport, may be admitted into *the everlasting habitations*.

This

This doctrine I take to be the most sweet and precious part of our Christian faith; that which gives the most pure and undivided *honour* to God; which yields the most reviving and solid *comfort* to the sinner; and, in the most endearing and effectual manner, promotes every interest of *holiness*. But inasmuch as it is little understood by some, entirely exploded by others, and scarce ever thought upon by more; let us crave your impartial attention, while I clear up and confirm it: and not only crave your attention, brethren, but implore the renewing and enlightening influence of divine grace; without which, I am aware, my words will be unintelligible to some, and appear, perhaps, ridiculous to others: for *the natural man discerneth not the things which are of the Spirit of God;* on the contrary, *they are foolishness unto him.* Depending, therefore, on divine grace, let us examine,

I. How the obedience of *another* can make *us* righteous.

II. How *sufficient* Christ's obedience is for this purpose.

III. How *worthy* this method of becoming righteous is *of all acceptation;*—and then,

IV. Give some few directions, that may dispose us to rely on, and prepare us to receive the righteousness of Jesus Christ.

I. Let us examine how the obedience of *another* can make *us* righteous. This point may be proved and illustrated,—

(1.) From the nature of a *surety*.

(2.) From Christ's *dying* AS A SINNER for *us*.

(3.) From *Adam*'s sin being IMPUTED to *us*.

(1.) The doctrine, of our being made righteous through the obedience of Christ, may be proved and illustrated from the nature of a *surety;* who is *one that undertakes*

undertakes and engages for another. Let us suppose the parties were *Paul* and *Onesimus*. *Onesimus* was *Philemon's* slave.—The slave disobeyed his master, ran away from him and his service;—not only deserted his service, but stole his goods; turned *fugitive* and *thief* at once.—For the *first* of these crimes he deserves *stripes* and a road; for the *last*, death and the *gallows*.—St *Paul*, meeting with *Onesimus*, learns the state of his condition: and, having been the means of his conversion to Christianity, by his preaching; and of his reconciliation to God through Jesus Christ; offers to become his mediator with his offended master. In order to execute which office more effectually, he puts *himself* in the criminal's *stead;* becomes answerable for his villany, and takes upon him to make full reparation for the injuries he had done to his master:—*If he hath wronged thee ought*, (says the beneficent apostle,) *or oweth thee ought, put that to my account; I Paul have written it with mine own hand I will repay it.*—By this means, the renegade slave is discharged, and *Paul* the innocent apostle becomes debtor. But how?—Not actually, but imputatively; for neither has *Onesimus* repaid, nor *Paul* stolen ought; but, by virtue of the undertaken suretyship, *Onesimus's* debt lies upon *Paul*, and *Paul's* freedom turns to the acquittance of *Onesimus*.

Thus it is in the matter of justification.—We had all sinned in Adam; forfeited the favour of God.—In order to our reconcilement, God required a *full satisfaction* to his justice, and a *perfect obedience* to his laws. These we could not possibly render in our own persons; therefore Christ graciously presented HIMSELF, and undertook to perform both in our stead.—*Upon* ME, says the compassionate Redeemer, *upon* ME, be their offences laid.—If they have transgressed, let vengeance make its demands on *me;* I will repay to the very uttermost farthing; and forasmuch as, through the weakness of their mortal nature, they are not able to yield an exact conformity to the divine laws, I

am

am willing to *fulfil all righteouſneſs* in their ſtead and behalf. *Lo! I come to do thy will, O my God!* I do it, not for myſelf, but for them, that the merit of my obedience may redound to my people, and that they, through my righteouſneſs, may be made righteous.

(2.) The doctrine, of our being made righteous through Chriſt, may be inferred from his *dying as a ſinner for us*.—'Tis a very remarkable paſſage, and full to our purpoſe, where the apoſtle declares, that the almighty Father made his Son, *who knew no ſin, to be ſin for us that we might be made the righteouſneſs of God* IN HIM.

How you may be affected at preſent with ſuch a ſcripture, brethren, I cannot determine: but if ever you come to the knowledge of *yourſelves*, and the hainouſneſs of your *ſins*, and the worthleſſneſs of your *duties;* ſuch a text will be ſweeter to you than the honey or the honey-comb to your taſte, and more refreſhing than the richeſt cordial to your ſouls.—However, from St *Paul*'s declaration, we gather this precious truth, that we are *made righteous* before God, *in ſuch a manner* as CHRIST was *made a ſinner* for us: not by any perſonal demerit; for he had done no ſin, neither was guile found in his mouth; but *the Lord laid on* HIM *the iniquities of us all*.

In like manner, how are the greateſt ſaints made righteous before God? Not by any perſonal merit. They have done nothing that can deſerve God's love, or that is worthy of a reward; but God looks upon them as intereſted in his dear Son's obedience, and ſo rewards them purely for their Saviour's ſake.—God viſited *our ſins* upon HIM; and God rewards *his merits* upon us; God accounted *our* tranſgreſſions to be *his;* and, on this footing, he was puniſhed as a malefactor; and God eſteems his righteouſneſs as ours; and, by virtue of this *imputation*, we are accepted as complete.

(3.) Once again, the doctrine, of our being made righteous

righteous through the obedience of Chriſt, may receive ſtronger proofs and fuller illuſtrations from *Adam's ſin being imputed unto us*.—This is an undoubted truth, written, as it were with a ſun-beam, in almoſt every page of ſcripture. St *Paul* aſſures us, that *in Adam all die*. And, if ſo, 'tis certain that *in Adam all ſinned*. Tell me now, how came that *perſonal* ſin of Adam to be charged upon us? how can his having eat the forbidden fruit, render us liable to death and damnation? How, but *by imputation?* Adam was a public perſon: he repreſented the whole race of mankind: his act was imputed to his whole poſterity. Such a communion there is between Chriſt and his elect: he, too, was a public perſon; he was a repreſentative of all his choſen ones; and his obedience is looked upon as theirs. Thus believers are made righteous by the obedience of their everlaſting head Chriſt Jeſus, even as they were made ſinners by the tranſgreſſion of their mortal father, Adam; becauſe of the analogy and ſimilitude there is between his righteouſneſs to juſtify, and Adam's iniquity to condemn *.

Let

* Mr *Hervey* ſeems, here, to have had an eye to 1 Cor. xv. 22. *For as in Adam all die; even ſo in* CHRIST *ſhall all be made alive.* The πάντες, or *all* affirmed by the apoſtle to have died in Adam, are the ſame πάντες, or *all*, that ſhall be made alive in Chriſt; namely, all the members of Chriſt's myſtic body; all that church, which he loved, and for which he gave himſelf to death. There are two reaſons, in particular, which determine the meaning of the word *all*, in this paſſage, to the *elect*, and to *them only*. 1. Throughout the whole context St Paul treats ſolely of the *firſt* reſurrection; the reſurrection of the juſt; the reſurrection to life eternal. He ſays not one word in this chapter, concerning the reſurrection of the ungodly; but confines himſelf ſingly to that of true believers. 2. He, in the very next verſe, expreſsly points out the perſons of whoſe reſurrection he here ſpeaks: theſe, he tells us, are οἱ Χριστοῦ, *thoſe that belong to Chriſt*, and are his own peculiar property; who were given to him, by the Father, in the covenant of redemption; and in whom he has a ſpecial, indefeaſible intereſt.

Let us now make a pauſe, and review our attempt. We have endeavoured to render the doctrine of the text ſomewhat clearer, by conſidering the nature of a *ſurety*,—from CHRIST's being *made ſin for us*,—and from the *imputation of Adam's offence* to us. But theſe, alas! are points little known to the world. Corrupt nature is prejudiſed againſt them; and Satan is ſtudious to hide them from our eyes. Let us beſeech *the God and Father of our Lord* JESUS CHRIST, to reveal the *myſtery of godlineſs* in our hearts; that we may believe in JESUS CHRIST as the Son of God, and only Saviour of the world; *and that believing we may have life*, not through any fancied goodneſs of our own, but entirely *through his name*.

II. Let us now juſt take notice, how ſufficient CHRIST's obedience is for the purpoſe of juſtification. It is a moſt incomparably-excellent obedience: it exceeds, not only the righteouſneſs of innocent and upright *Adam*, but the righteouſneſs of *angels*, *principalities*, *and powers*.—Extol this righteouſneſs as high as words can reach, or idea ſoar! for it is the righteouſneſs of incarnate Divinity; wrought out by HIM, who was GOD *and* MAN *in one* CHRIST; whoſe divine nature gave an infinity both of efficacy, and of dignity, to all he did. *To you that believe* the Godhead of JESUS, his righteouſneſs muſt needs be inconceivably *precious:* you will not, you cannot think it ſtrange, that *a whole world of believers* ſhould be accepted thro' it, and owe all their ſalvation to it.—The prophet, in the moſt expreſs terms, ſets his ſeal to this truth, when he affirms, that *the* LORD, the ſupreme and incomprehenſible JEHOVAH, is *our righteouſneſs:* and who would forſake the *everlaſting* ROCK, in order to lean on a *bruiſed reed?* who would quit an *illuſtrious* ROBE, for ſcanty covering and *filthy rags?* St *Paul* accounted *all things but loſs*, in compariſon of his Saviour's *righteouſneſs*. Yea, his own eminent holineſs, and tranſcendent

ſcendent uſefulneſs, he regarded no more than *droſs and dung*, that he might *win* CHRIST, *and be found in* HIM. This is the righteouſneſs, whoſe influences extend to the earlieſt days, and will reach to the moſt diſtant ages. By *this* the holy men of old enjoyed the favour of God: by *this* ALONE, the generations yet unborn will enter into their Maſter's joy. In a word, this is the *hope*, the *ſure* and *ſole* hope of *all the ends of the earth, and of them that remain in the broad ſea:* for, in every nation under heaven, and through all the revolutions of time, God is well pleaſed with ſinners, only in his beloved Son. Let me draw one remark from the whole, and I have done. Let me obſerve the difference between *the law of* NATURE, and *the law of* MOSES, and *the law of* FAITH. The law of *nature* ſays, "*Live up to* "*the duties of thy reaſon and the conviction of thy own* "*mind; and thou ſhalt be ſafe.*" The law of *Moſes* ſaith, "*Keep the commandments and execute all the ſta-* "*tutes, and thy ſalvation ſhall be ſure.*" But FAITH ſaith, "*Thou needeſt not attempt theſe impoſſibilities.* "CHRIST *hath done both, hath done all in thy ſtead.* "*He hath improved the light of nature and fulfilled the* "*whole law of* GOD; *and this in the capacity of thy* "*Surety.*" Go, then, to thy Redeemer; lay hold on HIS righteouſneſs. Believe truly in CHRIST JESUS, and what *he* hath done ſhall be accounted *thine*. Thy eternal felicity is ALREADY procured. Thou haſt nothing elſe to do, but to look upon it as thy certain portion, and unalienable inheritance, through Chriſt; and to live in humble and chearful expectation of that great day, when thy free title ſhall be changed into actual poſſeſſion. And, in the mean time, love that divine Benefactor with all thy heart, and ſtudy to pleaſe him in all holy converſation and godlineſs.

SERMON II.

ROMANS V. 19.

By the obedience of ONE *ſhall* MANY *be made righteous.*

IN the book of *Job*, iv. 13,—17. we have a very awakening leſſon of humiliation, moſt admirably calculated to impreſs the thought, and to bring down the conceited mind. *Eliphaz* relates a viſion *. When midnight drew her black curtains over the world, when darkneſs and deep ſilence reigned through the whole univerſe; in theſe ſolemn moments, a ſpirit paſſed before his face. Fearfulneſs and aſtoniſhment ſeized the beholder; his bones ſhivered within him; his fleſh trembled all over him; and the hairs of his head ſtood erect with horror. In the midſt of theſe tremendous circumſtances, a voice broke forth from the fiery phantom: a voice, for its *importance*, worthy to be had in everlaſting remembrance; and, for its *awfulneſs*, enough to alarm a heart of ſtone. It ſpake to this effect, "SHALL MORTAL MAN BE JUST BEFORE GOD? SHALL A MAN BE PURE IN THE SIGHT OF HIS MAKER?" The words, thus tranſlated, breathe a wonderful dignity of ſentiment; and lead our minds into the moſt exalted notions of GOD ALMIGHTY, immaculate,

* See Mr HERVEY's *Contemplations on the Night*, vol. I. p. 304. In the preſent ſermon, the deſcription of *Eliphaz*'s viſion reſembles the primary ſketch, the naked, imperfect outlines of a maſterly picture: but, in the *Contemplations* (publiſhed about four years after this was preached) we behold the picture completely finiſhed; and touched, I had almoſt ſaid, into the very perfection of grandeur and beauty.

maculate, and inconceiveable.—Certainly, they comprise one of the most powerful antidotes, against the pride and haughtiness natural to fallen man, that can possibly be imagined. They are a token, in this sense, truly worthy of the awful Being who uttered them, and that air of vast importance with which they were introduced.—Our translation sinks the idea exceedingly. It tells us no more, than what all the world must acknowledge at the very first reflection; and so scarce deserves to be ushered in with so great solemnity. It seems also to oppose what no one can deny, or have insolence enough to maintain:—for none, I should imagine, even *Lucifer* himself, could ever presume to think himself more just, more pure, than the ORIGINAL and STANDARD of all perfections.—No: let a person be esteemed ever so just, in comparison of his fellow-sinners; let him be accounted most eminently holy, by those that are polluted clay like himself:—Yet, before infinite and uncreated purity, O! let him be greatly abased; let him put his mouth in the dust, take shame to himself, and cry out, *Unclean! unclean!* According to this translation of the words, you see, the doctrine of man's universal depravity is as ancient as the times of *Job;* and, that there is no possibility of being justified by any *personal* accomplishments or acquirements, was expressly taught in those early ages.

O! that it may be as unfeignedly believed in these latter days! "But if this be the case," says an inquisitive hearer;—"if all men are become abomi-"nable; if their *best* deeds are stained, and there are "*none* that are righteous before GOD,—no not *one*;—"how shall they be accepted, when they are judged?" —Why, by a method that lyes vastly beyond the reach of human wisdom or device. By a method, that was but dimly * hinted at in the generations of old, but is clearly

* That is, dimly hinted at, in comparison of that more perfect knowledge, which has been since brought to light by the gospel eminently so called. See *Eph.* iii. 5.

ly revealed by the apoſtles and preachers of the goſpel; even by the obedience of Jeſus Chriſt; by a righteouſneſs *not wrought* BY us, but *imputed* TO us. The nature of which imputation we have already illuſtrated, and ſhewn the ſufficiency of our Redeemer's obedience for this purpoſe.—Which two points being diſpatched,

III. I am to ſhew you how *worthy of all acceptation* this method of becoming righteous is.—And that as it is perfectly *conſonant to the ancient prophecies;* as it gives the *higheſt glory to God;* and as it yields *the richeſt conſolation to man.*

1. This method of becoming righteous through the obedience of Chriſt, is perfectly conſonant to the tenor of *ancient prophecies.* In the patriarchal age, GOD promiſed to *Abraham*, and renewed the gracious aſſurances to *Iſaac*, "that *in his ſeed all the* "*nations of the earth ſhould be bleſſed.*" Now, what was this, but a diſcovery of this evangelical doctrine? 'Twas, indeed, ſomewhat obſcure then; but 'tis clear as the day now. The *ſeed of Abraham*, is doubtleſs our glorious *Mediator*,—who, in the fulneſs of time, took fleſh, and was born of a deſcendent from *Abraham.* In HIM all the elect under heaven ſhall be bleſſed.—Obſerve, not in themſelves, not for any excellency that is in them; but IN HIM they ſhall inherit all heavenly bleſſings. He is the *Alpha* and *Omega* of our happineſs; the beginning and the end, the cauſe and the conſummation, of all our joy. He is the only ſpring and fountain of all bleſſedneſs, as much as yonder ſun is the only fountain of this light that now ſhines around us. Every ray of light that falls upon our eyes, proceeds altogether from that bright luminary: we do nothing towards enkindling it; we only *uſe* its beams, and *rejoice* in its ſplendor. So fallen man can do nothing towards procuring the favour of his almighty MAKER: but can only, by faith

faith in JESUS CHRIST, receive it, already procured; and teſtify his gratitude for it, by a chearful obedience.

In the prophet *Iſaiah*, we find the following paſſages. God the Father, ſpeaking of his obedient and beloved Son, has this remarkable expreſſion; *By his knowledge ſhall my righteous ſervant juſtify many*. Here, infinite wiſdom informs the whole world, how they muſt expect juſtification, and final acceptance. 'Tis entirely through his dear SON, our divine MEDIATOR; his holy life, and propitiatory death, are the only procuring cauſes of our forgiveneſs, the only conditions of our ſalvation; and a true knowledge of him,—a right belief in him, make the merit of both our own *.

GOD ſays not, he ſhall make them *capable* of reconciliation; he ſhall *in part* juſtify; he ſhall *fill up* their deficiency, and perfect what is wanting in their duties. No! but he ſhall *accompliſh* the whole work; he ſhall execute the great office without a rival; without a partner, he will juſtify the faithful, and not they themſelves.

2. This method of becoming righteous, through the obedience of Chriſt, is worthy of all acceptation, becauſe it gives *the higheſt glory to God*. Nothing can be ſo effectually calculated to *abaſe* the ſinner, and *exalt*

* From a ſaving knowledge of Chriſt, and by faith in him, we are *manifeſtatively* intereſted in what he has done and ſuffered. Our intereſt in his righteouſneſs muſt, in the very nature of things, have been prior to our *ſenſe* of intereſt in it: otherwiſe, all ſenſe of it would be deluſive, and converſant with a non-entity. Faith is, as it were, the *medium of ſpiritual viſion*; a divine light whereby we ſee our intereſt in Chriſt, which we cannot ſee, till we believe with the faith that works by love. *Faith* is the ἔλεγχος, or *conviction of things not ſeen* before; and of juſtification among the reſt, *Heb.* xi. 1. But, ſurely, the bleſſings, of which faith is the conviction, had a real exiſtence before ever faith was acted: they are only *unſeen*, till faith is given to diſcern them by.

alt the Saviour, as THIS way of obtaining ſalvation. This will bring down the lofty look of man: this will lay every aſſuming thought in the very duſt, and leave the Lord alone glorious and exalted: THIS thoroughly ſecures to God his great prerogative, and utterly excludes human boaſting, and brings unmingled honour and glory to the Surety of men. Whereas, was life eternal the reward of their own works, there would be ſome pretenſion for ſelf-admiration.—Men would arrogate ſome of the merit to themſelves, and ſay in their hearts, *My power, and the might of my hands hath gotten me this wealth.* If they were to expect the bleſſing of the eternal ſtate as *wages* which they have earned, O! what a damp would this ſtrike on their thankfulneſs! how little would they *think* themſelves obliged, and, indeed, how little *would* they be obliged, to God their Saviour, on this footing! But, when ſaints in light view their heavenly inheritance; when they ſurvey that great, exceeding great and eternal weight of glory, and remember that they did *nothing* to deſerve all this ineffable felicity; that, if it had not been procured entirely by their dying and obedient Saviour, they had been everlaſtingly baniſhed from the realms of bleſſedneſs; O! what pure and fervent gratitude muſt this inſpire them with!—what an emphaſis and ardor, while they utter that devout acknowledgment, "*Not, not unto us, O Lord! not unto us, but unto thy* dear "and adorable *name be the praiſe!* We were *enemies* "*in our minds*, and *by our wicked works;* but thou haſt "*redeemed us unto God by thy blood:* all our choiceſt ac- "tions were polluted and unclean, but thou haſt "worked out for us a perfect and everlaſting righ- "teouſneſs."

Thus will adoration and love be given to the Lamb that was ſlain: every crown will be caſt low before the throne, and wear this humbling motto, *Not by works of righteouſneſs which we have done, but according to his mercy he ſaved us.* O! the depths both of the

the wisdom and goodness of God!—*Goodness*, in establishing such a method of salvation for us; in all things so well ordered and sure! *Wisdom*, in cutting off all occasion of self-glorying, and bringing man to the deepest humiliation, even while it exalts him to the heaven of heavens!

3. This method of becoming righteous through the obedience of Christ, is worthy of all acceptation, because it administers the *richest consolation to man;* it is an inexhaustible spring of satisfaction and repose.

LUTHER, that renowned reformer, and great champion for the Protestant cause, when he broke away from the mists of Popery, and began to understand this most noble peculiarity of Christianity, declared, that "the gate of Paradise seemed to fly open to his view: "—that he had a glimpse of its beauty, in contemplating this sacred truth; and a taste of its delights, in believing it: so sweet a composure, and such a charming "tranquillity, did it diffuse thro' his mind." Nor do I wonder at his saying, "For, while we are ignorant of "this doctrine, there is nothing but horror and dread "around us." If we strike this text from our Bible, or this article from our creed, all is dismal and distressing. Turn which way you will, the prospect is uncomfortable. If we look to *ourselves*, we shall find misery and guilt; if to GOD, nothing but indignation and displeasure.—But this brightens up the whole scene. Let us observe, in the character of a feeble Christian, and of an awakened profligate, what glad tidings the gospel is, by virtue of this doctrine; and what a miserable comforter it would be without it. The language of the *former*, in his private meditations, must proceed in some such manner as this: "Wherewithal shall I come before "the most high God? Shall I offer him my pious "services? Alas! they are miserably deficient; they "issue from a corrupt stock, and cannot but be cor-"rupt shoots; I have done nothing that is worthy of "his acceptance, how then shall I stand in his sacred

" preſence? I ſtrive to be perfect and entire, and " wanting nothing; but I feel myſelf to be poor and " indigent, and wretchedly defective. O! whither " ſhall I go, but to him who is appointed for this " very purpoſe? that the bones, which are broken by " miſery and guilt, may rejoice; that the hands, " which hang down, through ſelf-condemnation and " deſpondency, may be lifted up.—Thither then will " I turn, frail and diſpirited as I am, and caſt all my " burthen upon the Lord Jeſus Chriſt: in his un- " ſpotted righteouſneſs, and in nothing elſe, can the " ſole of my foot find any reſt. When doubts ariſe, " and fear, like a gloomy cloud, thickens around me, " this *Sun* of righteouſneſs ſhall diſſipate the gloom " in all my pilgrimage; this ſhall be my conſtant " ſong; in all my anxieties, this ſhall be my only " cordial:—*Why art thou caſt down, O my ſoul, and* " *why art thou ſo diſquieted within me! O! put thy truſt* " *in* Jeſus Chriſt! His merits, and not thine own " works, are the horn of thy ſalvation: *whoſoever be-* " *lieveth in him ſhall not be confounded.*" And as for the poor ſinner brought to a ſenſe of his enormous crimes; methinks, I hear him bewailing his condition, in ſome ſuch diſconſolate manner: " O wretched man " that I am! how ſhall I attain the favour of God? " My ſins are multiplied above number, and aggrava- " ted beyond expreſſion. I cannot make any ſatisfac- " tion for what is paſt, much leſs can I win the di- " vine good-will for the future. I am polluted, root " and branch: what can I do?"—Truly, ſinner, I know not what thou canſt do, unleſs thou comeſt to Jeſus Chriſt: there is not a gleam of hope, or a grain of comfort, in all the univerſe beſides. If thou lamenteſt thy folly, and feeſt thy undone ſtate; *with the Lord there is mercy*, abundant mercy; and with the Lord Jeſus Chriſt there is *plenteous redemption.* If thou canſt rely on *Chriſt*, thy iniquities ſhall be done away like a morning-cloud; if thou

canſt

canſt believe in HIM, thy debts are cancelled through his blood; and that which thou art unable to perform, he hath fulfilled for thee. See, how conſonant this doctrine is to the whole ſeries of ſcripture, and the voice of ancient prophecies! See what an unſhared revenue of glory and thankſgiving it brings unto the bleſſed God:—both ſupporting the *feeble Chriſtian* amidſt all his infirmities, and opening a door of hope to the *awakened ſinner*, notwithſtanding all his impieties! Surely, then, this precious doctrine is worthy of all acceptation: ſurely we have reaſon to receive it with all imaginable thankfulneſs! But, leſt it ſhould, after all, ſeem to us an idle tale, rather than glad tidings of great joy, let me,

IV. Give ſome directions that may diſpoſe *us* to rely on, and prepare us to receive, the righteouſneſs of Jeſus Chriſt.

Firſt, Bring a child-like mind to the conſideration of it. Lay aſide propoſitions *, and meekly receive the ingrafted word with a teachable ſimplicity. Let us ſit at the feet of Jeſus, and, like very little children, learn heavenly wiſdom from his goſpel. If we are conceited of our abilities, and lean to our own underſtanding, God may puniſh our pride, by leaving us

* "Lay aſide *propoſitions:*" a miſtake, perhaps, for *prepoſſeſſions*. However, the ſentence, as it ſtands, conveys a very uſeful direction: "Lay aſide propoſitions;" *i. e.* Submit your wiſdom to God's; embrace his gracious method of ſalvation; without arguing yourſelf into needleſs doubts and perplexities. —Mr HERVEY ſeems, here, to intimate, what another excellent divine has ſince expreſſed more clearly: "Believe ſimply, "with the meekneſs of a child, juſt as you are told by GOD, "without murmuring or diſputing. Depend as abſolutely, "day by day, on the teaching of Chriſt, through his word "and Spirit, for the knowledge of all things needful to ſalva- "tion, as any pupil, at an academy, depends on the inſtruc- "tions of an able and celebrated maſter."

Mr VENN's *complete duty of man*, p. 165.

us in the dark; for he *hides these things from the wise and prudent, and reveals them unto babes.*—You must acknowledge your natural ignorance, and implore the teachings of his blessed Spirit; for this is his peculiar office, to *convince the world of righteousness;* that is, to convince the world of the fulness of the Redeemer's righteousness, of its unsearchable riches, and of its absolute sufficiency to justify his people.

Secondly, If you would not be offended at this doctrine, get a deep sense of *your own* UN*righteousness*. It is the want of *this* conviction, that indispose men for a reliance on Christ; so long as they fancy themselves *rich and increased in goods*, they will never be concerned to seek the *fine gold* of their Saviour's obedience.—And, indeed, he *came not to call the righteous;* his gospel is of such a nature, that the self-justiciary will discern no comeliness in it: it will feed the *hungry*, and *poor in spirit*, with good things; but the *rich*, and those that are *righteous in their own eyes*, it will send empty away.

Labour, therefore, to see your own vileness: and then the merits of a Saviour will be precious. Be sensible of your own *nakedness*, and then the *robe* of a Redeemer's righteousness will be prized indeed. Consider yourselves as *insolvent*, *wretched bankrupts*, who HAVE nothing, who can do nothing, that is spiritually good; and then the perfect obedience, the full satisfaction of your divine Surety, will be *as health to your soul, and as marrow to your bones.*

Thirdly, Pray for *faith*. 'Tis faith that unites * to Jesus

* *Sensible* union with Christ, or actual fellowship with him, in a way of comfort, occasioning *the soul's calm sun-shine, and the heart-felt joy*, is, no doubt, a result of faith. But then, this is not so properly *union* itself, as *communion* flowing from an union that subsisted between Christ and his church from before all time; and of which union, that communion, which follows upon faith, is no more than the perception, discovery, and enjoyment.

Jesus Christ. By faith you are implanted into him. *Faith* is the *hand* that lays hold on the Saviour's merits: *By faith ye are saved*, says the apostle. This appears, to the soul, the *great salvation* purchased by our dear Redeemer: therefore beseech God to beget in you this lovely and lively faith, whereby you may lay hold on Christ, cleave most inseparably to Christ, and, renouncing every other refuge, lay the whole stress of your souls solely on Christ, as a shipwrecked mariner relinquishes all his sinking cargo, and clings only to the planks that may float him safe to shore. Seek this blessing to yourselves, brethren; and, if ever I forget to join my best supplications to yours, *let my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth*. My *heart's desire*, and *prayer to God*, shall always be, that you may *believe to the saving of your souls*.—And a *holy conversation* will be a sign unto you, that your *faith* is *real*.—A life of *sincere holiness* can spring from nothing but from this divine head, CHRIST JESUS. *By this shall all men know that ye are* his *disciples*, if ye *live by his Spirit*, and *walk as he walked*. *By* this, likewise, your own consciences may be assured, that God hath given you an interest in his dear Son, and sent him to bless you; if he has *turned you from your iniquities*, and *created you anew unto good works*.

Give me leave, at the close of all, to ask you with all simplicity, Have you understood these things? do you believe this report? or am I as one that speaketh a parable?

If any be of this opinion, I shall address them in the words of St *Paul* to the *Galatians*, and commit them to enlightening grace. The apostle, inculcating this very point, and persuading them to this self-same belief, says, *Brethren, be as I am, for I* WAS *as ye are* *. Thus the words I would translate; and then they are very pertinent to the purpose, and applicable to you and me; and when paraphrased, will run thus: "I "don't

* Gal. iv. 12.

" don't wonder, brethren, that ye are prejudiſed a-
" gainſt this doctrine. I myſelf was ſtrongly poſſeſſed
" with ſuch prejudices. I verily thought, that *my*
" *own* righteouſneſs would, at leaſt, bear a part in
" procuring my acceptance with the eternal Majeſty.
" Determined I was, in ſome meaſure, to *ſtand on my*
" *own bottom:* and advance my plea, for life everlaſt-
" ing, from my own holy endeavours. But now
" theſe arrogant reſolutions and vain confidences are
" dropt. I now diſavow all ſuch pretenſions. God
" hath brought me to a ſounder mind.—And, as ye
" have been partakers with me in my miſtake, be
" partakers alſo of my righter judgment. I truſt-
" ed to I knew not what: but *now I know in whom*
" *I have believed.* I put myſelf, and the whole of
" my ſalvation, in my adored Immanuel's hands;
" and doubt not of his ſufficiency for my ſecurity.
" Henceforward I ſet my heart at reſt, not becauſe I
" have gone through ſuch offices, or done ſuch du-
" ties; but becauſe my Redeemer is mighty and me-
" ritorious. *'Tis God*, the incarnate God, *that juſtifies*
" me; *who is he that ſhall condemn* me? Never, never
" ſhall my heart cry to divine juſtice, *Have patience*
" *with me, and I will pay thee all:* this were the lan-
" guage of groſs ignorance, or great preſumption. But,
" in all my temptations, in every diſcouragement,
" this ſhall be my acknowledgment, this ſhall ſtill be
" my earneſt prayer, 'The righteouſneſs of thy obe-
" dience, moſt bleſſed Jeſus, is everlaſting; O! grant
" me an intereſt therein, and I ſhall live."—Amen,
Amen; ſo let it be, O Lord.

A

COLLECTION

OF

LETTERS

Written by Mr Hervey, from 1733 to 1758.

PREFACE.

IT has been already observed, in the account of Mr Hervey's Life prefixed to vol. I. that he frequently wrote religious letters to his acquaintance according to their different circumstances, in the most amiable and convincing manner; and that he seemed to make it almost an invariable rule, not to write a letter on any occasion, without at least one pious sentence in it; and that not introduced in a forced and awkward manner, but interwoven so as to appear naturally to arise from the subject *.

The reasons for publishing this collection of Mr Hervey's letters, were the strong solicitations of those, who knew and valued the author and his writings; a desire of contributing to the interests of religion, which was the great scope of all his labours; and a persuasion, that such a collection would give a peculiar satisfaction to every intelligent and pious person:—especially as to be thus introduced to partake of the entertaining and instructive intercourses of his friendship, may possibly

* Vol. I. p. xxxvii. xxxviii.

possibly be the means of encouraging others to GO AND DO LIKEWISE. Nor will it be, it is presumed, necessary to bespeak the candour of the reader, or deprecate the petulance of criticism, whatever defects or inaccuracies may be found in a work of this kind, not intended for, though well worthy of, the public eye.

As the following letter to the editor is so truly characteristical of Mr Hervey, 'tis to be hoped that it will not be altogether unacceptable to the reader—When writers like him, of distinguished superiority, have gained our admiration and applause, we are fond of penetrating into their more retired apartments, and associating with them in the sequestered walks of private life: for here these great geniuses appear in an undress; the intrinsic excellence of their characters shines out with genuine lustre; and although, as authors, their talents are beyond our imitation, yet the several milder graces and virtues of their more common and ordinary behaviour, are in some measure attainable by every one.

SIR,

'TWAS with no small satisfaction I saw an advertisement in the public papers, desiring the correspondents of the late Mr *Hervey* to furnish the editor with some of his letters for publication, and glad I am 'tis in my power to send you so large a number; since in many of them will be found such *traces of an upright heart*, as no stranger can otherwise be made acquainted with. *There* will be seen *the deepest humility*. Ever unconscious of his own shining abilities, he was always desirous of improving by the meanest in the church: in lowliness of mind he would prefer others to himself: he would frequently be the humble querist, and make his friend the respondent. *There* will be seen *the greatest love* to mankind;—a love, which he has strongly expressed on every occasion, not only *in words*, but in the most important acts of benevolence, both temporal and spiritual. *There* will be seen the *most zealous attachments to truth*. He was extremely desirous that every sentiment of his should be strictly examined; and wherever he found any thing capable of the least improvement, he immediately acquiesced with the greatest thankfulness.—In a word, *there* will be seen the *utmost serenity of mind* under the pressure of very grievous afflictions. As his joy was not of this world, no worldly calamities could take it from him, nothing could ruffle, nothing could discompose him.—He was indeed, what his Master says of the Baptist, a *burning* and a

shining

shining light; and as such as he was a guide for our feet.—As a *burning* light, he warmed many by his example: he had received the grace of God in abundance; which he had long and most earnestly implored; and the fruits of which, in his life and conversation, the world have seen, and his friends will tell with pleasure.—As a *shining* light, he instructed many by his doctrine. He was a most strenuous assertor of the free grace of God. He taught men to be rich in good works, without placing the least dependence on them. Christ was all to him, and it was his *whole business* to publish his Redeemer's unsearchable riches.—It was St *Paul*'s faithful saying, *viz.* That, "Christ Jesus *came into the world to save sinners;*" and it was Mr *Hervey*'s constant employment, to bring sinners to him empty-handed, "to buy wine and milk without money "and without price."

He was also a most strenuous assertor of evangelical holiness.—While he published the *free grace of God*, he was solicitous that none should abuse it to licentiousness. Herein also he imitated St *Paul* in another faithful saying, *viz.* That "*they who* believe in God should be careful to maintain good "works."

Such was the friend I have lost. God grant we may all "*be* "*the followers of him, who through faith and patience* now *in-*"*herits the promises.*"—He rests from his labours, and my correspondence with him is for ever at an end; but by the letters I here send, *he will, though dead, yet speak*, and spread wide that valuable instruction, and those ingenious remarks, which were originally designed only for the private inspection of, Sir, your humble servant, *&c. &c.*

P. S. Mr *Hervey*'s zeal for his great Master, and his eminent abilities to advance the interests of religion, will, it is hoped, secure the good opinion of the community, in behalf of the publication of his private letters and life; especially when it is considered, that it was in some measure necessary to be done; not only as they exhibit in their purport, composition, and various tendencies, a striking, amiable, and true picture of the ingenuity, learning, candour, and piety of this excellent man; but as his character has been injured *by some* through misrepresentation: and as his writings have been censured by *others* through misapprehension:—all such will now see how far Mr *Hervey* is deserving of blame, or of applause; since there is nothing that expresses a man's particular character more fully, than his letters to his intimate friends.

In this edition care has been taken to arrange the letters in the same order in which they were wrote, as far as was practicable. But there is no possibility of doing it exactly, for this plain reason, that in many letters written to those with whom he kept a frequent correspondence, Mr Hervey was accustomed to express neither month nor year, but only to write *Monday morning*, *Tuesday night*, &c.; and that several letters were transmitted to the editor, with the dates as well as names erased.

There are a few things inserted in this collection, such as the cottager's letter *, Mr Boyse's †, the letter to Dr T** ‡, which were introduced, not only for the great propriety of such an introduction, but at the particular desire of some of Mr Hervey's friends, in order to fulfil his intentions, and render him, though dead, as extensively useful as possible.

"I would by all means," says one of his most judicious and favourite correspondents, "have that letter of mine, addressed "to Dr *T***, printed in the collection; as I think this may "in some measure be fulfilling the will of my deceased friend, "who appears by his own letter ‖ to me to have judged some-"thing of that nature *highly necessary;* and he would certain-"ly have attempted it himself, as he declared, had not a cer-"tain church-preferment brought him very unexpectedly into "a connection, which made such a publication at that junc-"ture ineligible.—Mr *Hervey* is now dead, and that reason "is no longer in force; and therefore now seems to me the "fittest time for such purpose. I wrote that letter to Dr "*T*** at Mr *Hervey*'s express desire, and I gave him full "power to make what use of it he pleased; hoping, that, "after correcting it to his mind, he would have sent it to "Dr *T*** himself; or else that he would have wrote in an-"other form (perhaps in an introduction to his fast-sermons) "something far more valuable, extracting from my letter "what best answered his ends. But that not being done, the "publication of my letter in this collection, immediately after "what Mr *Hervey* says in his to me † about Dr *T***'s ser-"mon, may, with the same divine blessing, be of use; and, "though of little worth, yet, like the widow's mite, when it "was her ALL, it may be acceptable.—There are thousands "of preachers who think in the same way with Dr *T***, and "very likely many of these may be the readers of Mr *Hervey*'s "letters: and if some of them reflect and reform, the unjust "anger

* Let. 83. † Annexed to let 166. ‡ Let. 158.
‖ Let. 157. † 'Tis so printed as here desired.—See let. 158.

" anger of the reſt is very little to be regarded. Therefore, " upon the moſt ſerious conſideration, it is my earneſt requeſt, " that the letter to Dr T** ſhould be printed juſt as I ſent it " to Mr *Hervey*."

It muſt be acknowledged, that ſome of his firſt letters written from college when he was not more than twenty years of age, either ſpeak a language different from free grace, for which we find he was afterwards ſo powerful an advocate, or at the leaſt they treat very confuſedly of it; and perhaps ſome may ſay, why then were they printed? For theſe two plain reaſons; that the reader may ſee and know what early and ſtrong impreſſions he had of piety! what love to GOD! and to his fellow-creatures!—Though we ſay not, that, like *John Baptiſt*, he was ſanctified from his mother's womb, yet his very early labours for his Saviour, when too many others of his age and ſtanding were captivated by their paſſions, and ſwallowed up by their luſts, prove to a demonſtration, the doctrine he afterwards taught, *viz.* the power of redeeming love: they ſhew how early the ſeeds of grace were ſown in his heart; and when they look forward, they may obſerve from what ſmall ſparks of light and grace the Holy Spirit hath gradually taught him *, and led him, as it were by the hand, into the full and holy liberty of the children of GOD. When but twenty-one years of age, we find him afraid of, and flying from praiſe, when others would be courting it; for having wrote ſome verſes to a relation which were greatly commended, he heartily wiſhes † he had never wrote a line of poetry in his life; and he wrote upon another occaſion ‡ expreſsly blaming a friend for praiſing him; and again ‖, he ſays, "You have paid " me an obliging compliment; beg of the bleſſed GOD, dear " Sir, that I may not be puffed up with vain conceit of myſelf " or my writings."

From the reading of theſe familiar letters, which is in a manner liſtening to and hearing the thoughts of the writer, we may learn, that, by nature, "his heart was hard as the flint. " and his hands tenacious even to avarice;" thoſe are his words ⸸. Yet (ſee the power of that free grace, which living and dying he ador'd) he became a bright example of univerſal charity ††.

His great humility and diffidence of his own judgment and learning, appear in many of his letters; in one, which is far from

* Iſ. liv. 13. John vi. 45. † Letter 3. ‡ Letter 52.
‖ Let 60. ⸸ Let. 53. †† See his life, p. xxxiii. and let. 51, 60. &c.

from being contemptible either for ſtyle or argument, he enjoins his friend to return his letter immediately to him, that it might never appear: yet his friend got the better of that modeſty, and obtained leave to keep it; to which is owing the publication of that now, which Mr *Hervey*, at the time of writing it, deſired it might never ſee the light *.

Another inſtance, and a ſtriking one, we may meet with, let. 53. where, anſwering the objections of a lady to the miracle which Chriſt wrought at the marriage of *Cana* in *Galilee*, he ſays, "I have neither ſtrength of mind nor ſolidity of judg-" ment, ſufficient to conduct the procedure of an argument," *&c.*

As the love of God was ſhed abroad in his heart; it produced an ardent deſire to promote the cauſe of CHRIST JESUS and of his religion. And when he found himſelf bowed down with the ſpirit of weakneſs and infirmity, he was apt to fear leſt he ſhould diſgrace the goſpel in his languiſhing moments †; he earneſtly prayed to God, and deſired others to unite in the ſame petition, that he might not thus diſhonour the cauſe of CHRIST. And his and their prayers were heard; for notwithſtanding his lingering weakneſs and depreſſed ſpirits, which at length gave him up into the hands of death, yet he triumphed over his fears, he triumphed over the grand tempter and adverſary of ſouls.

His willingneſs to have his writings corrected, by every judicious friend, and his thankfulneſs in receiving their criticiſms, appear throughout all his letters written to his learned correſpondents; a ſpecimen of it you may ſee, let. 61. 101. 181. His earneſt deſire to prefer his friend's opinion to his own; or, in other words, his humble opinion of his own judgment and powers in argumentation, makes him ever requeſting, "Pray uſe freely the pruning-hook," *&c.* It may ſeem a wonder, therefore, that he ſhould ever, under theſe diſcouraging thoughts of himſelf, write at all, eſpecially ſo much as he has done; conſidering he was no more than five and forty when he died, and that the firſt of his works was publiſhed when he was thirty-three.—Perhaps the reader might be almoſt tempted to ſuſpect, that his humility was affected, and that pride lurked under that fair garment: but hypocriſy dwelt not in him; he wrote under all that weakneſs, and under all thoſe fears, becauſe he dared not be ſilent; the cauſe of God and truth was publickly attacked; the cauſe of his Maſter was oppoſed,

* Let. 24. † Let. 60.

oppoſed, and he, as a faithful watchman, was compelled, however weak in body, however unequal he thought himſelf to the taſk, he was compelled to cry aloud and ſpare not; and therefore he wrote not from pride, or from avarice, but from conſcience, and a ſenſe of duty; and this the intelligent and candid reader will eaſily perceive from many of his letters.

At a time when infidelity and depravity prevailed, and when it was become almoſt faſhionable to ſlander and ſpeak evil of perſons, depretiating another's reputation in order to raiſe or eſtabliſh our own; we find Mr *Hervey* making it a rule to ſingle out the beſt things he had heard of his neighbour, and carefully avoiding even to hint any thing which might be the cauſe of propagating a rumour * to his detriment; or to diſcloſe a ſecret which might be injurious to him: thus careful was he to carry into his own practice, the doctrine he taught, the religion he profeſſed;—and thus far was he from eſpouſing either the principles or practices of *Antinomians*. Some of his pretended friends of that ſtamp, as well as his adverſaries, have taken much pains to make the world believe, that he in all things agreed with them, that, if poſſible, they might be thought not to differ from him; but they will find it as impracticable to raiſe their reputation upon his, as it will be to reduce his character to a level with their own, ſo long as his works ſhall live to proclaim his principles, and a friend ſhall remain to declare his truly Chriſtian practices, his holy life and converſation.

It cannot but be obſerved, that Mr *Hervey*, in two of his letters †, has repeated the ſame argument in pretty near the ſame words; and perhaps this repetition may diſguſt the delicate and curious reader, eſpecially as it returns ſo ſoon as within the compaſs of thirty pages; but it is to be conſidered, that, they were written at different times; the one to a clergyman at *Bath* in 1743, and the other for the ſatisfaction of a lady five years afterwards; and as the objections were the ſame from both, Mr *Hervey* had a right to return each of them the ſame anſwer.

I muſt once more treſpaſs on my reader's patience, as I cannot conclude without expreſſing my hopes, that every perſon of candour and judgment will make the neceſſary allowances for thoſe different ſtates, both of body and mind, which one of Mr *Hervey*'s weak conſtitution muſt have undergone in the ſpace of five and twenty years, during which theſe letters were wrote.—A manifeſt inequality of judgment, of accuracy, and

* Let. 58. † Let. 17. & 53.

and of ſtyle in familiar letters wrote at ſuch diſtances, with more or leſs attention and care, according to the variety of circumſtances which occur, and without the leaſt thought of their publication, will appear; nor can it be otherwiſe expected indeed from any one.—Some of the greateſt geniuſes of the age, ſuch as *Pope* and *Swift*, have made their apology in the ſame caſe; and no one, I am ſure, is more juſtly entitled to the indulgence of the public, than he whoſe letters are here collected.

LET-

LETTERS

Of the late Reverend

MR JAMES HERVEY.

LETTER I.

To his SISTER.

Lincoln-College, Oxon. Sept. 16. 1733.

Dear Sister,

WAS there any occasion to apologize for the serious purport of this, it would be sufficient to direct you to the date, and the time of its inditing; but I promise myself, that to you any thing of this nature will be unnecessary. For though we are in the very prime and spring of our years, strongly disposed to admire, and perfectly capacitated to relish the gaieties of youth; yet we have been inured to moderate the warmth of our appetites, accustomed to anticipate in our minds the days of darkness, and incessantly disciplined into a remembrance of our Creator. For my part, I find no season so proper to address one of the principal sharers of my heart, one of my nearest and dearest relations, as that I have at present chose and made use of, when either an universal silence composes the soul, and calms every turbulent

bulent emotion, or the voice of joy and gladneſs ſpeaking through celeſtial muſic, invites to adore the wonders of our Redeemer's love, touches upon the ſtrings of the ſofteſt paſſions, and inſpires the moſt ſweet, moſt tender ſentiments.

As I was the other day traverſing the fields in queſt of health, I obſerved the meads to have loſt that profuſion of fragrant odours which once perfumed the air, to be diſrobed of that rich variety of curious dies, which ſurpaſſed even *Solomon* in all his glory. Not a ſingle flower appears to gladden the ſight, to beſpangle the ground, or enamel the barren landſcape. The clouds, that ere long diſtilled in dews of honey, or poured themſelves forth in ſhowers of fatneſs, now combine in torrents to overflow the lifeleſs earth, to bury or ſweep away all the faint footſteps of ancient beauty. The hills that were crowned with corn, the valleys that laughed and ſung under loads of golden grain; in a word, the whole face of nature, that ſo lately rejoiced for the abundance of her plenty, is become bare, naked, and diſconſolate. As I was continuing my walk, and muſing on this joyleſs ſcene, methought the ſudden change exhibited a lively picture of our frail and tranſitory ſtate; methought every object that occurred, ſeemed ſilently to forewarn me of my own future condition.

I dwelt on theſe conſiderations till they fermented in my fancy, and worked themſelves out in ſuch like expreſſions. "What! muſt we undergo ſo grievous an "alteration? we, whoſe ſprightly blood circulates in "briſkeſt tides! we, who are the favourites of time, "on whom youth, and health, and ſtrength, ſhed "their ſelecteſt influence! we, who are ſo apt to look "upon ourſelves as exempt from cares, or pains, or "troubles, and privileged to drink in the ſweets of "life without reſtraint, without alloy! Muſt we fore-"go the ſunſhine of our enjoyments for any thing "reſembling this melancholy gloom! Muſt the ſpark-

"ling

" ling eye ſet in haggard dimneſs? the lovely features " and glowing cheeks be obſcured by pale deformity? " muſt ſoft and gay deſires be baniſhed from our " breaſts, or mirth and jollity from our converſation? " muſt the vigour of our age fall away like water " that runneth apace, and the bliſsful minutes of the " prime of our years vaniſh like a dream? If this be " our caſe, in vain, ſure, do we boaſt our ſuperior " felicity, in vain do we glory in being the darlings " of heaven. The inanimate creation droop indeed, " ſicken and languiſh, for a time; but quickly revive, " rejoice, and again ſhine forth in their brighteſt luſtre: " 'tis true, they relinquiſh, at the approach of win- " ter, their verdant honours, but reſt fully aſſured of " receiving them with intereſt from the ſucceeding " ſpring. But man, when he has paſſed the autumn " of his maturity, when he has once reſigned himſelf in- " to the cold embraces of age, bids a long, an eternal " adieu to all that is entertaining, amiable, or en- " dearing; no pleaſing expectations refreſh his mind; " not the leaſt dawnings of hope glimmer in to qua- " lify the darkſome looking-for of death."

I had not long indulged theſe bitter reflections, before I eſpied a remedy for thoſe ſore evils which occaſioned them. Though I perceived all our paſſionate delights to be vanity, and the iſſue of them vexation of ſpirit; yet I ſaw likewiſe, that virtue was ſubſtantial, and her fruits joy and peace; that though all things came to an end, the ways of wiſdom were exceeding broad. The ſeeds of piety, if implanted in our tender breaſts, duly cheriſhed, and conſtantly cultivated, will bud and bloſſom even in the winter of our days; and when white and red ſhall be no more, when all the outward embelliſhments of our little fabric ſhall diſappear, this will ſtill flouriſh in immortal bloom. To walk humbly with our God, dutifully with our parents, and charitably with all, will be an inexhauſtible ſource of never-ceaſing comforts. What,

though we shall sometimes be unable to hear the voice of singing men and singing women; though all the senses prove false to their trust, and refuse to be any longer inlets of pleasure; 'tis now, dear sister, 'tis now in our power to make such happy provisions, as even then, in those forlorn circumstances, may charm our memories with ravishing recollections, and regale all our faculties with the continual feast of an applauding conscience. What sweet complacency, what unspeakable satisfaction shall we reap from the contemplations of an uninterrupted series of spotless actions! No present uneasinesses will prompt us impatiently to wish for dissolution, nor anxious fears for futurity make us immoderately dread the impending stroke; all will be calm, easy, and serene; all will be soothed by this precious, this invaluable thought, that by reason of the meekness, the innocence, the purity, and other Christian graces which adorned the several stages of our progress through the world, our names and our ashes will be embalmed, the chambers of our tomb consecrated into a paradise of rest, and our souls, white as our locks, by an easy transition, become angels of light. I am, with love to my brother,

Dear sister,

Your most affectionate brother,

JAMES HERVEY.

LETTER II.

To his SISTER.

Dear Sister, *Lincoln College, Oxon. Mar.* 28. 1734.

IT is now a considerable time since I enjoyed the true and real pleasure of your company. I say true and real, because my fancy has often took its flight to *Hardingston*, and delighted itself with the imaginary conversation of you and my other dear relations;

tions; I have frequently recollected, and as it were acted over again in my mind, the many pleasing hours we have spent together in reading holy and edifying books, or discoursing on pious and useful subjects. And methinks I should have been exceeding glad to have had the satisfaction yet more improved, by receiving a letter from you; which I am sure would have been full of the most tender endearments of love and affection, and I hope would not have wanted expressions of true religion and virtue; and could I but once see that, could I but observe ourselves not only dwelling together in unity, but travelling hand in hand towards the heavenly Jerusalem, mutually encouraging and assisting one another to fight the good fight, to lay hold on eternal life, then should I greatly rejoice, then should I begin to live.

I hope I may now congratulate your perfect recovery; however I am certain there is great reason for congratulation on account of your being so choice a favourite of heaven as your frequent sicknesses, and often infirmities speak you to be. Our gracious Father, though an indulgent lover of all mankind, seems to watch over you with more than ordinary care and concern, to be extremely desirous, nay, even solicitous for your salvation. How does his goodness endeavour, by the repeated, though lightest strokes of his rod, to cure whatever is disordered, to rectify whatever is amiss in you? How studiously does he seek, by laying you on a sick-bed, to make you see yourself and all things else in a true and proper light; to point out to you your frailties and follies, your darling lusts, and the sins that do most easily beset you; to convince you that you are only a sojourner here upon earth, your body a poor frail and corruptible house of clay, your soul a bright, glorious, and immortal being, that is hastening to the fruition of God, and to mansions of eternal rest; to discover to you the vanity, meanness, and contemptible littleness of this world, and the

worth, the importance, and amazing greatneſs of the next. Do not then hold out againſt theſe kind calls to repentance and amendment; do not reſiſt ſuch earneſt importunities, ſuch ſweet ſolicitations. But ſuffer yourſelf, by this loving correction, to be made great; great in humility, holineſs, and happineſs. Humble yourſelf under the mighty hand of God; and by a hearty ſorrow for your paſt faults, and a firm reſolution of obedience for the future, let this fatherly chaſtiſement bring forth in you the peaceable fruits of righteouſneſs. Oh! let us dread, let us tremble, to reject any longer the tenders of grace, leſt we awake at length his juſtice, and draw down vengeance upon ourſelves; leſt our viſitation be not in love and with kindneſs, but in heavy diſpleaſure and with fury poured out; leſt his next diſpenſation be not a merciful ſeverity, but indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguiſh.

Sure I can't but admire that adorable wiſdom which has contrived all things ſo evidently and ſo directly to your advantage! Your late illneſs has, I doubt not, begot in you ſerious thoughts and holy diſpoſitions, and theſe I flatter myſelf will be nouriſhed by the reception of the bleſſed ſacrament the following *Eaſter*. Let us, dear ſiſter, break off our ſins by repentance;—let us amend our lives, and begin from this very inſtant to deny all ungodlineſs and worldly luſts, and live ſoberly, righteouſly, and godly in the preſent world. So ſhall we anſwer the good ends of our ſickneſs;—ſo ſhall we be meet partakers of thoſe holy myſteries here, and enjoy an inheritance amongſt the ſaints in light hereafter.—And now I can't but acquaint you, how earneſtly I wiſhed that you and others of my neighbours (with whom I have diſcourſed upon this ſubject) were giving devout attendance to the prayers and praiſes that were offered up laſt *Monday* in your church, as likewiſe how I ſhould rejoice with exceeding great joy, to hear that both you and they continue

ſtedfaſt,

ſtedfaſt, or rather abound more and more in the practice of this and ſuch other religious duties. And if you think the deſire of my heart, and the longings of my ſoul are of any weight with any of them, pray let them know how I hope, deſire, and pray, that we may be worthy communicants, by an immediate forſaking of all wicked ways, and a thorough amendment, as well as an unſhaken reſolution to perſevere and advance in that amendment.

My kind reſpects to all that you ſhall ſhew or read this letter to; deſire them not to forget me in their prayers: let ** and ** know that I often think of them, and hope they ſometimes remember me, and the words that I have often ſpoke to them.—I am, *&c.*

JAMES HERVEY.

LETTER III.

Dear Siſter, *Lincoln College, Oxon. May 2.* 1734.

FInding myſelf in a writing humour, and remembering that I had formerly promiſed you an entertaining preſent, and being ſenſible of the decency of introducing it with an epiſtle; upon theſe accounts I again ſet pen to paper, and addreſs you, notwithſtanding you have ſo very lately received a letter from me. By an uſefully-entertaining preſent, I mean ſuch an one as will improve and edify, at the ſame time that it diverts and delights; as will not only make you eaſy to yourſelf and agreeable to others, but alſo good, and holy, and wiſe unto ſalvation. Now I ſcarce know any human compoſition more likely to promote theſe excellent purpoſes than this poem on the laſt day *. For being in verſe, and ſet off with all the graces of ſpeech and thought, it can't fail of charming as well the nice ear as the ſound judgment; and as for the ſubject,

* By Dr Young.

ſubject, ſure nothing can be more prodigiouſly pleaſing, than to read of that happy time which ſhall be the beginning of a bliſsful eternity; when our Redeemer, by his mighty power, ſhall change our vile bodies, that they may be like unto his glorious body, and tranſlate us from a ſtate of corruption in the grave, to ſhine forth as the ſun in the kingdom of our Father. And every one muſt own, that the moſt engaging perſuaſions to piety and holineſs of converſation are drawn from the recompenſe of a future invaluable reward; and that the moſt ſovereign preſervative againſt all ungodlineſs and worldly luſts, is the terrors, the inſupportable terrors of the Lord. If therefore you would pleaſe yourſelf, refine your taſte, or have the practice of religion pleaſing, inſtead of plays, ballads, and other corrupt writings, read this almoſt divine piece of poetry; read it (as I have done) over and over, think upon it, endeavour to digeſt it thoroughly, and even to get by heart the moſt moving paſſages, and then I truſt you will find it anſwer the ends I purpoſe in ſending it.

You will excuſe me from exerciſing my poetical talent, ſince there are already two copies of recommendatory verſes, and becauſe I perceive ſuch an attempt will be either very abſurd or very dangerous. For ſhould I tack together a few doggrel rhymes, this would be an affront to you; whereas, ſhould I ſucceed ſo well as to gain the applauſe of my readers, this I am ſure would portend very great harm, if not to you, yet moſt certainly to me. For what can portend greater harm than the words of praiſe; which, though ſmoother than oil, yet be they very ſwords? What can be more deſtructive of that humble mind which was in Chriſt Jeſus, that meek and lowly ſpirit which is in the ſight of God of great price! I am ſo far from carrying on my verſifying deſigns, that I heartily wiſh I had never conceived any; that thoſe lines I ſent to my couſin ***** had either never been made, or that I had never heard them commended. Pride and

vanity

vanity are fooliſh and unreaſonable in duſt and aſhes, and, which is worſe, odious and deteſtable before infinite perfection and infinite power. O! let you and I then dread whatever may adminiſter fewel to theſe worſt of tempers, more than the poiſon of aſps, or the peſtilence that walketh in darkneſs. Let us pray againſt ſeeking, deſiring, or taking pleaſure in the honour that cometh of men. And if at any time the flattering tongue, that ſnare of death, ſhall overtake us, let us inſtantly fly unto our Saviour, and complain unto our God; then let us remember; and remembering, let us acknowledge, that we are nothing, have nothing, and deſerve nothing but ſhame and contempt, but miſery and puniſhment.

I hope you was ſo happy as to receive the holy ſacrament this *Eaſter;* and I beg of you to be ſo wiſe as well to underſtand and often to conſider what you then did. We gave up ourſelves, our ſouls and bodies, to be a reaſonable, holy, and lively ſacrifice to God: ſo that we muſt look upon ourſelves as having now no longer any right or title to ourſelves, but as our heavenly Maſter's ſole property; we may not follow our own, but muſt do his will in all things. We undertook to lead a new life, to follow the commandments of God, and to walk henceforth in his holy ways; and this and whatever elſe we promiſed at that ſacred altar, we muſt endeavour to perform, if we hope to enter into heaven. Let therefore no day paſs without reflecting on the ſolemn engagement we have made, and without examining whether we have acted up to it. Let us not imagine that we did the whole of our duty, when we took the conſecrated elements into our mouths; but be convinced, that we only as it were liſted ourſelves afreſh under our Captain's banner, and that the ſervice, the fight againſt his and our enemies, is to be hourly renewed, and conſtantly maintained even unto death.—I am, *&c.*

JAMES HERVEY.

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LETTER IV.

Dear Sister, *Oxen. March* 11. 1735.

YEsterday the judge came hither, and to-day the assizes begin. I shall go to hear the assize-sermon presently. This cannot but put us in mind of that great account we must all give before the judgment-seat of Christ. How melancholy a sight is it, to see a poor criminal go up to the bar! All he has is no longer his own; his very life is in the power of the magistrate; and he is in great danger of a speedy death. And if this be so dreadful, how infinitely more dreadful will it be to appear before a more strict and awful tribunal? The good Lord grant, that you and I may not be cast in that tremendous trial! A trial that will be undergone before angels and God; upon the issue of which our eternal life will depend. Was I to wish a wish for the dearest friend in the world; it should not be for gold, or jewels, or apparel; these things are fading, and the fashion of them passeth away; but it should be for a favourable sentence in that last and great day. Will not the archangel shortly sound the trump? Will not all the dead come forth of their graves, and the Ancient of days sit? How valuable then will an humble and holy life be! If you and I be found with the wedding-garment on, we shall doubtless enter into the joy of our Lord, never to die, never to grieve, never to be parted more. But if we should either of us be negligent in this matter; if we should be surprised without oil in our lamps: oh! the fearfulness and trembling that will come upon us! the horrible dread that will overwhelm us! to think that we must be for ever shut out of heaven, banished eternally from the presence of God the society of saints, and the fulness of joy! If you or I were to be torn from our kindred, and our father's house, and hurried away captive into a foreign country; there to be chained

to

to the galleys, or condemned to the mines: how would this grieve both us and our dear relations! how would it pierce our souls as a sword! if this be sad, (as certainly it is,) alas! what will it be, to be everlastingly separated by the unpassable gulf? for one to be caught up to heaven, and there to be ever with the Lord; and for the other to be thrust down into torments, and dwell with wailing and gnashing of teeth? Dear sister, let us consider this; and give all diligence to make our calling and election sure; that when the changes and chances of this mortal life are over, we may meet and live together in glory everlasting. Which is, and shall be, the hearty prayer of, —your, *&c.*

JAMES HERVEY.

LETTER V.

Good Madam, *Dummer, May* 7. 1737.

PRay be pleased to cast your eye to the bottom, and observe who it is that desires to bespeak you. It is one who knows himself to have been guilty of the most slighting behaviour, and to have deserved, in return your greatest disdain. If after you perceive his name to be *Hervey*,—that *Hervey* who was so lately and so long in *London*, without ever waiting upon Mrs ***; without paying his respects to her who merits so much the esteem of every Christian, without any thankful acknowledgment for her kind wishes so often conceived, and her prevailing prayers so often put up in his behalf:—if, Madam, after you are informed of all this, you can bear to give the remainder of the paper a favourable reading, I shall not only account myself highly obliged to your good-nature, but when I have an occasion to put up an affront, and to exercise forgiveness, I will think upon it as a pattern.

On *Sunday* I was called out by Providence from my own flock, to preach at two ſtrange churches. They lay at a conſiderable diſtance from each other, and from *Dummer;* ſo that in paſſing to them, and repairing again to my own pariſh, I travelled a good many miles. All the way I went along, I was entertained in the fineſt manner imaginable; far more finely than mine, or, I may venture to ſay, than any words can deſcribe. I wiſh I had the glowing colours, the accurate pencil, and the maſterly genius of ſome firſt-rate painter, that I might draw out, with as little injuſtice as poſſible, the lovely landſcape, and make a preſent, in ſome degree, worthy your acceptance. The air was in its beſt temperament; neither ſo hot as to enfeeble or diſpirit, nor ſo cold as to cauſe any uneaſy chillneſs. It was fit to recommend and ſet off the moſt agreeable objects, and to be the vehicle of perfumes, not much inferior to myrrh, aloes, and caſſia. I was in company with a gentleman of a clear underſtanding, and a tolerable ſhare of reading; he had ſeen much of the world, and had a very deep piercing inſight into things; he could talk judiciouſly upon moſt topics, and would ſometimes beſtow ſome hints upon religious ones. So that when I was diſpoſed for converſation, I could have immediate recourſe to one that would refine my taſte, and improve my judgment, if not miniſter grace to my heart. The face of the ſkies alſo conſpired to render every proſpect completely pleaſant; it was decked and diverſified with ſilver-like clouds; not ſuch as were charged with heavy rains, but ſuch as prevented the annoyance of one continued glare, and changed the ſunſhine frequently for a welcome ſhade; ſuch as ſerved for a foil to the unſullied ethereal blue. Thus did God order all circumſtances, ſo as to render our ride exceedingly delightful. At our firſt ſetting out, we went over ſtrong ground; where no ſeed was ſown, and ſo no fruit could grow. Its uſeleſſneſs was not owing to

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any defect in point of fertility, but to a want of being manured.

Is not this the case of many immortal souls, who are born with blessed dispositions, and bid fair for becoming eminent saints, but are lost and spoiled for want of care and instruction? O for faithful shepherds to seek them, for industrious husbandmen to cultivate them! Send, Lord, a plenty of such to work in thy vineyard, and to watch over thy sheep! This coarse beginning, though it had no form nor comeliness in itself, yet tended to give an additional verdure to the succeeding scenes. So the bottomless pit, and the unquenchable fire, though infinitely formidable, will create in the elect a more tasteful relish and enjoyment of their heavenly felicity. We made more haste than ordinary to get away from this barren spot. For why should any one tarry in such a place, or frequent such acquaintance, where all that occurs is vain and unprofitable? where nothing truly beneficial can either be imparted or acquired? The sooner we are delivered from such a situation, the better; no departure can be abrupt, no flight precipitate. When we were advanced a little farther, we entered upon a large inclosure. Here were all the footsteps of a commendable and successful industry. The wheat was in the blade, and sprang up with a plenteous increase, and in goodly array. It was not choked with weeds, nor embarrassed with thistles, but like a clean and even mantle covered the plain: a present credit, and likely to be a future comfort to its owner. This suggested to me the value of a diligent hand, that portion which it is in every one's power to bequeath to himself. All the affairs of the slothful are like the mountains of *Gilboa*, on which there was no dew, neither rain, nor fields of offerings. But where there is prudence and discretion to contrive, and a steady fervour to execute, there whatsoever is undertaken, will, in all probability, prosper. By a spirit of management, even the wil-

derneſs may be brought to bud and bloſſom as a roſe: and, was there ſuch a ſpirit in the profeſſors of religion, it would prompt them to be, like *Dorcas*, full of good works; or, like the great apoſtle, continually aſpiring after freſh and higher meaſures of perfection. We ſhould be frugal of our time, careful of all our talents, and moſt laudably covetous of every grain of improvement in piety. We held on our courſe, admiring ſtill as we went, the teeming earth, the infant corn, and the pregnant promiſes of a prodigious harveſt. This led me to muſe upon one of the diſtinguiſhing doctrines of Chriſtianity, I mean the general reſurrection. It convinced me how perfectly poſſible it is with God to raiſe the dead; it gave me alſo a glimpſe of that perfection of beauty, to which the bodies of the juſt ſhall riſe. For a little while ago I beheld, and lo! the whole vegetable world was naked and bare, without any ornaments, or ſo much as one amiable feature, like ſome withered, wrinkled, deformed hag. But now how charmingly it appears, and ſmiles, and ſhines! No virgin is more gay and blooming, no bride is better arrayed, or more ſparkling. And if God ſo enlivens and clothes the graſs of the earth, and the tenants of the field, how much more ſhall he quicken and ennoble our mortal bodies, which we hope are the temples of the Holy Ghoſt? Several of our dear friends we have accompanied to the grave: we ſaw with weeping eyes their poor bones depoſited in the duſt. But henceforth let us dry up our ſorrows; they are not to periſh, but to be purified in thoſe gloomy chambers. The hour is coming when the Lord himſelf ſhall deſcend from heaven, with the voice of the archangel, and the trump of God. Then ſhall they hear the almighty ſummons, and ſpring from their confinement like to a roe, or to a young hart upon the mountains of ſpices *. Then will they look forth from their dark abodes as the morning, fair as the

* Cant. viii. 14.

the moon, clear as the ſun *; never more to return to corruption, but to flouriſh in immortal vigour and youth. This is a pleaſing meditation, and deſerves to be indulged, but at this time it muſt give place to others. Our next remove was to a lane, ſet on either ſide with lofty trees and humble ſhrubs. Here the proſpect was contracted, and we had nothing left to contemplate but our branching and leafy mound. The little boughs, clad with a chearing green, were refreſhing to the eyes; and it was curious to obſerve, how every different plant was decked with a different livery. Here the twigs were gemmed with buds juſt ready to open and unfold; there they were already opened into bloſſoms, and garniſhed the pointed thorns; ſo that they were very delicate to look upon, though dangerous to touch. Oh! the adorable efficacy of the divine voice! how powerfully and how laſtingly it operates! God ſaid once, Let the earth bring forth; he ſpake not twice, and yet how punctually does nature obey this ſingle command! Several thouſand years are gone about, nor is its force evacuated, impaired, or at all diminiſhed. It endureth in full authority to this day, and is ſtill a moſt binding law to all the material world. O that men would lay this to heart, and learn a leſſon of obedience from the inanimate creation! All other things continue according to their Maker's ordinance, and ſhall man be the only rebel in the kingdom of nature? Shall man alone make the word of Omnipotence to be of none effect? While our ſight was regaled in this manner, a ſet of chiming bells ſaluted our ears with a ſolemn and ſerene harmony. It had no great diverſity of ſtops, nor artful mixture of notes, but ſure it was moſt gladdening muſic, and ſpoke a heavenly meaning. It was calculated to inſpire ſuch a joy as the royal Pſalmiſt felt, when he heard the acceptable invitation of going up to the houſe of the Lord. On a ſudden, when

* Cant. vi. 10.

when we were leaſt apprehenſive of it, the wind wheeled about, and bore away the ſilver ſounds. But it was only to bring them back again as unexpectedly, with the freſh pleaſure of a grateful ſurpriſe. Here I thought of the ſweeteſt influences of grace, and wiſhed for that happy time, when the viſits of the bleſſed Spirit will be uninterrupted. Quickly the lawns and plains diſappeared again, and we dived into a wood. Numbers of ſprightly birds, hopping and ſinging among the branches, ſolaced us as we paſſed. We thanked the pretty ſongſters, and bid them go on to ſupply our lack of praiſe. But what moſt of all affected us, being altogether new, was the warbling of the nightingale. What a tuneful throat has that charming creature, and what an unwearied uſe does ſhe make of it! I myſelf heard her melody in the day-time, and I am told in the night-ſeaſon alſo ſhe takes no reſt. How ſovereign and undeſerved is the goodneſs of the Lord to the children of men! The pipe of this wakeful choriſter, though now ſo inceſſant in thankſgivings, muſt ſoon be ſealed up in endleſs ſilence: while the mouth of dull and ungrateful mortals will be filled with everlaſting anthems. The air was impregnated with ſweets; and without money, or without price, we breathed in ſuch a delicious fragrance, as far excelled the powders of the merchant *. This put me in mind of ſome beautiful lines of the great *Milton*'s:

——Now gentle gales
Fanning their odoriferous wings, diſpenſe
Native perfumes, and whiſper whence they ſtole
Thoſe balmy ſpoils.

The other recalled to my memory part of a divine deſcription, vaſtly ſuperior to *Milton*'s. Lo, the winter is paſt, the rain is over and gone. The flowers appear on the earth, the time of the ſinging of birds is come, and the voice of the turtle is heard in our land †.

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* Cant. iii. 6. † Cant. ii. 11, 12.

Two of our senses being so exquisitely gratified, we were in no haste to leave the place, though it was narrow, and afforded no other prospect but the shining canopy over our heads. But as soon as we were emerged from this sylvan path, what wonders presented themselves to our view! I think I was scarce ever more agreeably startled in my life. We stood upon the brow of a hill, and underneath were tracts of level ground of an immense circumference. The labouring eye could hardly descry the utmost bounds. The whole scene, being parcelled out among a variety of tillers, and producing variety of fruits, was like a noble piece of chequer-work. The nearer parts, and those distinctly discernable, were replenished with rural riches. The folds were full of sheep, and of lambs, frisking by the side of their fleecy dams. The valleys stood so thick with corn, that they even laughed and sung. One spot was not sprinkled, but seemed to be overlaid with a profusion of flowers, as the roof of the temple was with gold; another was, as it were, enamelled, like an embroidered carpet, with a well-proportioned distribution; some of them yellow as oranges, some white as snow, some tinged with a border as red as blood. The towns and villages interspersed here and there, looked like the tiny tents of the fabled fairies. Numberless other beauties glanced upon my sight; but as I had not then leisure to examine them, so neither have I now room to relate them. O that these, and all the charms of the delightful season, may lead up every spectator's thoughts to the inimitable glories of heaven. And while the eye feasts upon them, let every tongue acknowledge to the honour of the all-creating God;

These are thy glorious works, Parent of good!
Almighty! thine this universal frame,
Thus wondrous fair: thyself how wondrous then!

I am, &c.

JAMES HERVEY.

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LETTER VI.

Dear Brother, *Dummer, June 27. 1737.*

I Find you are at *London* looking out for a trade, and a maſter to ſet yourſelf to. I hope, you pray earneſtly to God to guide you in your choice by his infinite wiſdom. He only knows what kind of employ will be beſt for you; in what family or neighbourhood you will have the moſt helps and encouragements to holineſs; where you will be moſt expoſed to temptations, to evil company, and to an early corruption. Therefore, remember what you have learned in the 3d chapter of *Proverbs*, and now, above all other times, put in practice: "In all thy ways acknowledge "him, and he ſhall direct thy paths." Beſeech the all-wiſe God to go before you in this weighty undertaking, and to lead you to ſuch a maſter, and to ſettle you in ſuch a place, where you may, the moſt advantageouſly, work out your ſalvation. Deſire alſo your honoured mother, and mine, to have a great regard to your ſoul, and the things that make for its welfare, in putting you out. Let it be inquired, not only whether ſuch a tradeſman be a man of ſubſtance and credit, but whether he be alſo a man of religion and godlineſs? whether he be a lover of good people? a careful frequenter of the church? whether his children be well nurtured and educated in the fear of the Lord? whether family-prayer be daily offered up in his houſe? whether he believes that the ſouls of his ſervants are committed to his truſt, and that he will be anſwerable for the neglect of them at the judgment-ſeat? It will be ſadly hazardous to venture yourſelf under the roof of any perſon, who is not furniſhed with theſe principles, or is a ſtranger to theſe practices. But, if he be quite contrary to all theſe, a deſpiſer of God and goodneſs, wholly devoted to carnal pleaſure, and worldly gain; if he not only omit the religious care and overſight of his houſehold, but alſo ſet them a wicked and corrupt example;—let nothing induce

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you to enter into his ſervice. A lewd, drinking, ſwearing, cheating maſter, will be ſure to diſregard the ſobriety and purity of your behaviour, and very likely to corrupt it. To have his diſorderly carriage daily before our eyes, will be as dangerous as to lodge in a plague-houſe. Therefore, let no conſideration of profit, or advantage, or of any other ſort, prevail with you to become apprentice to ſuch a one. If you do, depend on it, you breathe tainted air; and it is much but you catch the deadly infection.—After you are bound to a maſter, you muſt be as diligent in doing your duty to him, as you ſhould be of examining into his character before you are bound. As I have given you my advice concerning the latter of theſe particulars, I fancy you will not take it amiſs, if I give you ſome directions concerning the former. As ſoon as you are bound, you are at your maſter's, and not at your own diſpoſal: he has then a right to your hands, your ſtrength, and all that you can do. He becomes a ſort of parent to you; and though not a natural, yet a civil father. You are alſo obliged, not only by the laws of your country, and the tenour of your indentures, but by the 5th commandment of God, to pay him all due ſubmiſſion and honour. To do this, is a moſt material part of your duty, as a Chriſtian, as well as your undeniable debt, as an apprentice. It is required of you by God, in holy ſcripture; and you muſt not once imagine that you do what is pleaſing to him, unleſs you conſcientiouſly perform it. Now, that you may know what it is that your maſter will expect from you, and what it is that the Lord has enjoined you, with regard to him, remember, it conſiſts, firſt in reverence of his perſon; ſecondly, in obedience to his commands; and thirdly, in faithfulneſs in his buſineſs.

Firſt, in reverence of his perſon. You muſt eſteem him very highly for his ſuperiority's ſake, and the reſemblance he bears to God. For God, who made you,

and has an uncontrollable power over you, has communicated some of that power to your master; so that you are to look upon him as the representative, in some sort, of the divine Majesty, and invested with some of his authority. Accordingly St *Paul* says, 1 *Tim.* vi. 1. You must count him worthy of all honour; all, *i. e.* internal and external, that of the actions and words, as well as that of the heart. It is not enough to maintain a worthy estimation inwardly; but you must let it appear on all occasions outwardly, by behaving yourself very obligingly to him before his face, and by speaking very respectively of him behind his back. Suppose you should discern failings and infirmities in him, you must by no means divulge them, or make yourself merry with them, much less must you dare to set light by any of his orders. Whatever you have reason to think will grieve or displease him, will be prejudicial or offensive to him, that you must cautiously forbear.

Secondly, obedience to his commands. See how full the apostle speaks to this purpose, *Col.* iii. 22. Servants, obey in all things your masters according to the flesh. Observe likewise, from this passage, not only the necessity, but also the compass, and latitude of your obedience; how large and extensive it is. It reaches, not barely to a few, but to all and every instance. If you should receive orders that are ever so much against the grain of your own inclinations, you must force yourself to comply with them; receive them as you used to do nauseous physic; though they be unpleasant at first, they will do you good, and be comfortable to you afterwards; your own pleasure must always stoop, and give way to your master's. If he sets you such a task as is mean and ignoble, and such as (according to the expression of the world) is beneath a gentleman's son, do not scruple it, dear brother, but dispatch it chearfully. Remember who hath said, Servants, obey your masters in all things. And oh! remember,

member, that be we as well born and bred as we will, yet he that was higher than the higheſt of us all, even the moſt excellent and illuſtrious perſon that ever lived, condeſcended to the loweſt and (ſuch as our fine folks would account the) ſhamefulleſt offices. The Lord Jeſus Chriſt, though the brightneſs of his Father's glory, diſdained not to waſh his diſciples feet. Neither be dejected becauſe you are treated in an unworthy manner, or ſet to do ſome mean and low office for him, or his family; but rejoice rather in that you are made like unto your Redeemer, and in the happy proſpect you will have of becoming great in heaven, by being ſo little on earth. I am aware this piece of advice is not ſo unexceptionable as the reſt; it may poſſibly be adjudged the mark of too yielding and ſneaking a ſpirit; but never forget, that the things which are moſt highly eſteemed by God, are held in leaſt repute by men. I know, and am ſure, that if any apprentice would make ſuch a compliance for the ſake of preſerving peace, and out of conſcience to the command of God, and with an eye to the example of Chriſt, there is a day coming when he will not repent of it; when it will not be deemed a blot in his character, but be an ornament of grace to his head, and more comely than chains about his neck *. Well, you ſee your obedience muſt be univerſal; you muſt come when he calls you, and go where he bids you; do all that he commands you, and let alone all that he forbids you. This muſt, moreover, be done, not grudgingly, or of neceſſity, but readily and gladly: for hear what the ſcripture ſaith, Whatſoever ye do, do it heartily †; and again, With good-will doing ſervice ‡; ſo that we muſt not creep, but be quick and expeditious in our buſineſs, howſoever diſagreeable. You muſt not go about it with grumbling words and muttering in your mouth, but with ſo ſatisfied an air, as

* Prov. i. 9. † Col. iii. 23. ‡ Eph. vi. 7.

as may shew that you are pleased with whatever pleases your master.

Thirdly, in faithfulness in his business. This is the last branch of your duty to your master; and since *Moses* has obtained an honourable testimony, on this account, be you also faithful in all his house *. You may find this, as indeed all the qualifications of a good servant, described by St *Paul*, (*Tit.* ii. 10.) Not purloining, says he, but shewing all fidelity. You are charged not to purloin, *i. e.* not to keep back from your master, nor to put into your own pocket, nor convert to your own use, any of that money, which, in the way of trade, passes through your hands. You were taught from your childhood, to keep your hands from picking and stealing, and I hope you abhor such abominable practices from the bottom of your heart. You must not sell at a cheaper, and buy at a dearer rate, in order to have some valuable consideration made you privily in your own person. These differ from robbing on the highway, (they are flagrant acts of dishonesty, and will cry to heaven for vengeance,) only in being less open and notorious. Such tricks and villanous devices do the same thing by craft and treachery, as housebreakers do by force and violence. Therefore, dear brother, renounce, detest, and fly from them as much as from fire, arrows, and death. Besides, you are not only to abstain from such clandestine knavery, but also to shew all good fidelity. What is meant by this, you may understand, by reading how *Joseph* conducted himself in *Potiphar*'s service. Your master, it is likely, will commit the management of some of his affairs to you; and you must endeavour, by a discreet behaviour, and a pious life, to bring the blessing of the Lord upon all that you take in hand. You must lay out your time and your labour, and give all diligence to answer the trust repo-

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* Heb. iii. 5.

sed in you. You must not delay the business which is urgent, nor do your work by halves, nor transfer that to others which is expected you should do yourself. The slothful man, says *Solomon*, is brother to him that is a great waster; therefore you must avoid idleness, and carelessness. In a word, you must do nothing knowingly and wilfully that is likely to impoverish your master, but seek by all lawful and laudable means to increase his substance. All this you must observe, not only when he stands by you, and inspects you, but when his back is turned, and you are removed from his view; otherwise your service is nothing but eye-service, such as will prove odious to man, and is already condemned by God. For if you appear to be industrious, and in earnest, before your master, but to loiter and trifle when out of his sight, you will be chargeable with hypocrisy; a sin extremely hateful to Christ, and grievously pernicious to the soul.—But I am afraid I tire you; this one sentence, therefore, and I have done. You must carry yourself, throughout the whole course of your apprenticeship, so respectfully, so obediently, so faithfully, that at the end of it you may truly say with *Jacob*, With all my power I have served your father. I had more to write, but will send you (if you care to accept it) the remainder some other time. May God bless you all, and your affectionate brother, *&c.*

LETTER VII.

My dear friends, the inhabitants of Collingtree, near Northampton, *Dummer, June 29.* 1737.

I Received the letter wrote in your name, and signed with your hands, and was very well pleased with its contents. I am glad that you are all in good health, and am obliged to you for retaining so honourable a remembrance of an unworthy youth. Your desire to

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have a careful clergyman ſettle among you is perfectly right and laudable. But I fear you make an over-favourable and miſtaken judgment, when you imagine me to be ſuch an one, and pitch upon me for that purpoſe. However, letting this paſs; it is, I ſay, well and wiſely done of you, to be ſolicitous in this matter. For a miniſter is a perſon of the greateſt importance imaginable; his office is of the moſt univerſal concernment; and his demeanour therein, of the moſt beneficial or prejudicial tendency. Beneficial, if he be able, faithful, and watches for his people's ſouls as one that muſt give account. Prejudicial, if he be unſkilful, unactive, and unconcerned about the ſpiritual welfare of his people. The things that pertain to ſalvation, and the means of obtaining everlaſting life, are lodged in his hands. He is the ſteward of the myſteries of Chriſt, and ſo the guardian (under divine grace) of your beſt and moſt abiding intereſts. If through ignorance he miſmanage, or through idleneſs neglect this weighty truſt, it may be the ruin of immortal ſouls. Whereas, if he be both diſcreet and diligent in his holy vocation, he may be the inſtrument of the richeſt benefits to thoſe committed to his charge. His praying to God, and his preaching to them, may be attended with ſuch a bleſſing from on high, as will fill them with heavenly wiſdom; form them to true holineſs; and fit them for the future glory. Benefits theſe, not inconſiderable or momentary, but ſuch as are great beyond all expreſſion, and laſting to eternity. For theſe reaſons, it will be your wiſdom and your happineſs to procure a paſtor whoſe life is exemplary; whoſe doctrine is ſound; whoſe heart is warm with zeal for God; and whoſe bowels yearn with compaſſion for men. If your bones were broken, or if you were brought to death's door by the force of ſome violent diſeaſe; you would not be content with the preſcription of a quack, but ſeek out for the beſt advice. If your wives were in hard labour;

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if the children were come to the birth, and there was not ſtrength to bring forth, you would not ſpare to ride for the moſt experienced midwife. Oh! be as prudent and careful for the ſalvation of your ſouls, which endure for ever, as you are for the life of your bodies, which is but as a vapour. Remember, that you are ſick of ſin, ſadly diſordered by ſundry corruptions, and muſt neceſſarily be cured before you go hence, and are no more ſeen. Remember, that you muſt be regenerated and born again, or you cannot enter into the kingdom of heaven. And be not willing to truſt ſuch matters, which are of infinite and everlaſting moment, to the management of any that comes next.

Now that you may be the better able to make a right choice in this important particular, I will lay before you two or three of the diſtinguiſhing characters of a true miniſter.—Firſt, he has a tolerable ſtock of knowledge. Though not enough to explain all myſteries, or to anſwer every perplexing queſtion, yet enough to make himſelf and his hearers wiſe unto ſalvation. He may be ignorant of many things without much diſparagement to himſelf, or prejudice to his people; but he muſt be acquainted with, and able to teach others all that is neceſſary for them to know.—Secondly, he has not only ſome underſtanding, but ſome experience alſo in the way of godlineſs. He has learned to ſubdue, in ſome meaſure, the pride of his nature, and to be humble in his own eyes, and not fond of applauſe from others. He has broke the impetuoſity of his paſſion, and generally poſſeſſes his ſoul in patience; or if, upon ſome very ungrateful and provoking uſage, he cannot calm his temper, yet he can curb his tongue; and though his ſpirit be ruffled, yet his words will be gentle. He is moſt commonly meek after the manner of his bleſſed Maſter, and will always return bleſſing for curſing, according to his holy command. He has often looked into the ſhort-

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neſs of time, and the length of eternity; he has weighed the greatneſs and riches of heaven, with the inſignificant and deſpicable meanneſs of earth; and diſcovers ſuch a mighty difference, as helps him to live above the world, even while he is in it. So that he is no lover of filthy lucre, no hunter of carnal pleaſures, but his hopes, his deſires, and all his views of happineſs, are hid with Chriſt in God. He is courteous and condeſcending, and will ſtoop with the utmoſt chearfulneſs to the loweſt perſon in his pariſh. He will be affable and kind, and ſeek to pleaſe, not himſelf, but his neighbours, for their good, to edification. But you muſt not expect to find him trifling or ludicrous; he will not preach to you on the Sunday, and play with you on the week-days, but carry the ſpirit of his ſermons into his ordinary converſation. He will maintain an uniform gravity of behaviour, without ſuffering it to be frozen into moroſeneſs, or thawed into levity. He will love his pariſhioners, not for their agreeable perſons or amiable qualities, but becauſe they are redeemed by the blood of Chriſt. It will be his buſineſs and conſtant endeavour, I had almoſt ſaid his meat and drink, to ſet forward their ſalvation; that, by their being made meet for the inheritance of ſaints in light, his crucified Lord may ſee of the travail of his ſoul, and be ſatisfied. He will never forget the importunate requeſt of his Saviour, but thoſe winning and commanding words, Feed my ſheep, feed my lambs, will be engraven upon the tables of his heart. To fulfil this earneſt requeſt, and execute this laſt charge of his deareſt Redeemer, will be the fixed and invariable ſcope of all his deſigns. If at any time he hits this deſirable mark, by bringing home to the fold any that have gone aſtray, he will be as glad as one that findeth great ſpoils. To ſee the people of his care perſiſting in profaneneſs, ſenſuality, and an unconverted ſtate, will be the greateſt grief that he feels: but to ſee his children walking in the truth,

truth, mortifying their evil affections, and growing up in goodneſs as the calves of the ſtall, this will be his joy and crown of rejoicing; better to him than thouſands of ſilver and gold. It is his work to win ſouls; and by the former of theſe qualifications he is fitted for it, by the latter he is wholly devoted to it. And in order to proſecute it with the greater ſucceſs, he will, firſt, take heed to himſelf, that his life be a fair and beautiful tranſcript of his doctrine, ſuch as may remind men of, and be daily re-inforcing his inſtructions. He will not bind the yoke upon your ſhoulders, till he has wore it himſelf; and ſhould the paths of religion prove ever ſo thorny, he will go firſt and beat the way. As far as human infirmities permit, he will ſtrive to be unblameable and unreproveable, that he may renew the apoſtle's challenge, Be ye followers of me, even as I am of Chriſt. Secondly, his preaching will be plain; full of ſuch uſeful ſenſe as may be edifying to the better learned, and yet delivered in ſo eaſy a manner, as may be intelligible to the ignorant. It will not only be plain, but powerful alſo, if preceding prayers and tears, if words coming warm from the heart, and accompanied with an ardent deſire of being attended to; if to feel himſelf what he ſpeaks, and ſo long that it may be felt by others, can make it ſuch, he will declare the whole will of God, without with-holding or mincing any. Be the truth ever ſo diſagreeable, contrary to your profits, or contrary to your pleaſures, you will be ſure to hear it. He will indeed ſhew it in as lovely a light, and make it as palatable as he can, but nothing will prevail upon him to conceal or diſguiſe it. Thirdly, he will not confine his teaching to God's day or houſe, but will exerciſe his care of you every day, and will bring it home to your own houſes, whether you invite him or no. He will frequently viſit you, and for the ſame end as he meets you at church. Now, ſhall you like this part of his duty, or bid him wel-

come, when he comes on such an errand? Nay, he will think himself bound to proceed farther, and to inquire into the state of your souls, and your proceedings in your families; whether you are competently furnished with saving knowledge; and are careful to increase it daily, by allowing a daily portion of your time for reading the scriptures? what virtues you are deficient in, what vices you are subject to? what evil tempers, what vile affections, what unruly passions are predominant in you, and want to be suppressed? whether your children are catechised, and your servants instructed? whether you are constant in family-worship, and at your closet-devotions? how you spend the sabbath; whether you squander it away in impertinent visits, idle chat, or foolish jesting; or whether you consecrate it to the better exercises of prayer, praise, holy discourse, reading, and meditation? These, and other points of the like nature, he will examine into, and exhort you to amend what is amiss, no less than encourage you to persevere in that which is good. Nor will he exhort you once or twice only, but again and again, and hardly leave off till he has won your consent. In things that relate to himself, he will be easily said nay; but when the great God insists upon obedience, and a blessed immortality will be lost by disobedience, he will be instant in season, and out of season, he will solicit with unwearied applications the important cause, and press you to perform your duty: as the poor widow importuned the unjust judge to avenge her of her adversary, he will add to his exhortations, reproofs. His eye will be open, and his ears attentive to what passes in his parish; and when any one walks disorderly, he will meet him as *Elijah* did *Ahab* *, with a rebuke in his mouth. This I can promise, that he will not rail at, nor accost you with reproachful words; but he will certainly set before you the things that you have done. He will not defame you behind your backs, but

* 1 Kings xxi. 20.

but whether you be rich or poor, whether you be pleaſed with it or not, he will bear in mind the commandment of the Lord, and ſhew his people their tranſgreſſions, and the houſe of *Jacob* their ſins*. He will tell you with tenderneſs, but yet with plainneſs, that ſuch courſes are a ſad and too ſure a proof, that grace has not had its proper work on your ſouls; that ye are carnal, and have not the Spirit of Chriſt. So that a true miniſter of the goſpel will be a conſtant inſpector of your actions, a faithful monitor of your duty, and an impartial reprover of your offences. He will guide you by his counſel, and animate you by his example, and bleſs you by his prayers. If you be willing and obedient, he will conduct you ſafely through a troubleſome and naughty world, and bring you to the land of everlaſting felicity: but if you be perverſe and obſtinate, he will be a ſtanding terror to your conſciences here, and a ſwift witneſs againſt you hereafter; he will be the unhappy means of increaſing your preſent guilt, and aggravating your future account, and of making it more tolerable for *Tyre* and *Sidon* in the day of judgment, than for you.

And now, my kind and dear friends, are you, upon ſecond thoughts, deſirous of having ſuch a paſtor placed amongſt you? Shall you be glad to have the aforementioned vigilance and diligence exerted in the holy function? Can you willingly ſubmit to an overſight ſo narrow, to admonitions ſo inceſſant, to corrections ſo cloſe and particular?—If, after due conſideration, ye are willing; give me leave to inform you, how ye may procure ſuch a man of God to come unto you, and take up his abode with you. He is an exceeding great and precious bleſſing to any people; too precious to be purchaſed with money, and is the free gift of God. So that the way to obtain him, is to addreſs yourſelves to heaven, and make ſupplication to the Almighty. What cannot prayer, fervent and belie-

*Iſ. lviii. 1.

ving prayer do? I ſcarcely know any thing that is above its power, or beyond its reach. Prayer has locked up the clouds, and opened them again, made the earth as iron, and the heavens as braſs; prayer has arreſted the ſun in his race, and made the moon ſtand ſtill in her march, and reverſed the perpetual decree; prayer has fetched down angels from above, and raiſed up the dead from beneath, and done many wonderful works. In like manner, prayer will get for you an uſeful and worthy teacher; if he be ever ſo far off, this will bring him near; if he be ever ſo averſe, this will over-rule his inclination. Do you doubt of this; I own you would have good reaſon, if you had nothing but my word to ſupport it. But what if God, who cannot lie, has teſtified and given you aſſurance of the ſame? Why then, I hope, ye will be no longer faithleſs, but believing. Hear, therefore, what he himſelf has ſaid by his own beloved Son, Aſk, and ye ſhall receive; ſeek, and ye ſhall find *. Again, he ſaith, If ye ſhall aſk any thing in my name, I will do it †. Here you ſee the Almighty has paſſed his word, and he, to whom all things are poſſible, has pawned his veracity, that he will not deny you the requeſt of your lips. And dare you not truſt the Allpowerful? Can you have a better ſecurity than his, whoſe title is faithful and true? The divine promiſes are all immutable, ſtronger than the ſtrong mountains; and heaven and earth ſhall paſs away, ſooner than one jot or tittle of them ſhall paſs unfulfilled. When ye deſire a pious and able miniſter, ye deſire a good thing, ſuch as will be for the honour and glory of God to grant. Therefore, encouraged by this, and confiding on his moſt ſure promiſe, beg of the Moſt High to give you a true paſtor and ſhepherd for your ſouls; one that may love you like St *Paul*, rule you like *David*, teach you like *Samuel*, and lead you like *Joſhua* to the heavenly

* Matth. vii. 7. † John xiv. 14.

heavenly *Canaan*; that bleſſed and bliſsful country, where we all would be!

O God, great and glorious, infinite in thy wiſdom, and uncontrollable in thy power! thy providence is over all thy works; thine eyes run to and fro through the earth, to behold the condition, and ſupply the wants of thy ſervants. Thou ſenteſt *Moſes* to deliver thy children out of *Egypt*, *Philip* to inſtruct the ignorant eunuch, and *Peter* to preach to the devout centurion. O bleſſed Lord, who art the ſame yeſterday, and to-day, and for ever, vouchſafe the ſame mercy to us of this pariſh, that we alſo may have a teacher come from God. Grant us, O thou Giver of every good gift, a faithful ſhepherd for our ſouls; who may feed us in a green paſture, and lead us forth beſide the waters of comfort: one that may be wholly devoted to thy ſervice, and intent upon nothing but the due diſcharge of his important office; who may be a light to our paths by his godly directions, and as ſalt to our corrupting ſouls by his unblameable converſation. Let ſuch a miniſter, we beſeech thee, be placed over us, as will watch for our ſpiritual welfare; that will love us with an affectionate and parental tenderneſs; that will cheriſh us, as a hen cheriſheth her chickens under her wings: one that may be able as well as willing to inſtruct us in our duty, to whom thou haſt revealed the wondrous things of thy law, and the glorious myſteries of thy goſpel: whoſe lips may preſerve knowledge, whoſe tongue may be continually dealing it out, and whoſe mouth may be unto us a well of life: whoſe diſcourſes may be milk to the babes, meat to the ſtrong, and medicine to the ſick: who may have a ſkilful as well as a compaſſionate zeal, and know how to divide rightly the word of truth; who may be an example as well as an exhorter, a pattern as well as a preacher, of every charitable action, and every devout temper: under whoſe guidance we may walk in the ways of peace and piety,

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of meekneſs and humility, of righteouſneſs and ſalvation; till we all come to the city of the living God, to an inumerable company of angels, and to the ſpirits of juſt men made perfect. O grant us ſuch a prieſt, and clothe him with ſuch qualifications, and make thy choſen people joyful. Hear us, moſt merciful Father, for his ſake, whoſe ſheep we are, who bought us with his blood; who died for us on earth, and maketh interceſſion for us in heaven; even Jeſus Chriſt: to whom, with thee, and the Holy Ghoſt, be all honour and glory, world without end. Amen.

LETTER VIII.

To his SISTER.

Dear Siſter, *Dummer, July 5.* 1737.

I Hope *London* does not diſagree with the health of your body, and I dare ſay it may be made ſerviceable to the health of your ſoul. There are precious opportunities of going to church, and worſhipping the divine Majeſty, every morning and evening; which I hope you do not ſlight, but embrace with all thankfulneſs, and prefer before every other engagement. If you was grievouſly ſick, and even hard at death's door, you would be glad to have recourſe to any phyſician; but if you heard of one that could not poſſibly miſtake your caſe, and would infallibly cure you, how eagerly would you fly to him? Siſter, believe me, our ſouls are ſick of ſin, ſick of worldly-mindedneſs, ſick of pride, ſick of paſſion, and ſundry other diſorders, which, if not ſpeedily healed, will bring us down, not only to the grave, but to the torments of hell. We have almoſt as little taſte or reliſh of holy and devout exerciſes, as a ſick and languiſhing man has for the ſtrong meats he loved when he was well; which is a plain, and too undeniable a proof, that our better, our immortal part is ſadly out of order. Now at

church

church you may find a ſure and never-failing remedy for your ſpiritual diſorders. God's grace is a ſovereign medicine, and in his houſe it is to be obtained. There he, like a moſt bountiful and beneficent prince, ſtands ready to diſpenſe the help and aſſiſtance, the enlightening and purifying influences of his Spirit. Sure then, we who have ſuch urgent and immediate need of them, ſhall not be backward to go, and with an humble earneſtneſs ſeek them. I ſay immediate; for ſince our life is ſo uncertain, and we know not what a day may bring forth, we ought to get our work diſpatched, and our accounts ready without delay. It is evening now I write this; and I cannot tell whether this may not be the night, in which I am to hear that amazing cry, Behold the Bridegroom cometh. I intend to direct my letter to my dear ſiſter ****, and hope ſhe will receive it ſafe; but I have no certainty, whether ſhe be yet alive or no. For ought I know, her ſoul may be ſtanding before the judgment-ſeat of Chriſt, and going to be fixed, if not already fixed, in an unchangeable eternal ſtate. Her body may be pale and cold, and ſtretched out in the coffin; my dear mamma and my brothers taking their laſt farewell, and giving her the parting kiſs; the joiner juſt about to nail on the lid, and hide her face for ever from mortal view. Nay, ſhe may already have been carried upon mens ſhoulders, and committed to the duſt, ſo that what I am inditing, may find her in the grave. She may be ſleeping in ſome church-yard that I know nothing of, among thouſands of dead bodies, never to awake, never to ariſe, till the archangel's trumpet ſounds, and the heavens are no more. —The very imagination of this ſudden change, ſtrikes a damp upon my heart; I hope it is not a preſage of what has really happened; if it be, and if my dear ſiſter is a departed ſpirit, I will henceforth labour to dreſs my ſoul with holineſs, that it may be ready to go forth at a minute's warning, and give her the meeting

meeting in another world. There, if my ſiſter and I ſhall be found to have minded, above all things, the one thing needful, and to be full of heavenly, ſpiritual, and divine tempers, ſhe will be to me better than a ſiſter; and I ſhall be to her better than a loving and affectionate brother, *&c.*

LETTER IX.

My dear Friend,

I Received your kind letter, and thank you for your affectionate wiſhes. I endeavour not to be behind-hand with my people in this exerciſe of love. You are always on my heart, and often, often mentioned in my prayers. Eſpecially, that you may be partakers of the Holy Ghoſt, and feel all thoſe ſaving convictions, which are deſcribed by our Lord, *John* xvi. 8, 9, 10, 11. That you may be intereſted in the new covenant; and enjoy all thoſe precious privileges, which were purchaſed for us by our dying Saviour, and are recorded by his apoſtle, *Heb.* viii. 10, 11, 12.

Yeſterday, in the evening, two gentlemen of the city came to viſit me. Our converſation was ſuch, as I would have yours be; ſuch as was ſuited (if God vouchſafe his bleſſing) to edify one another, and miniſter grace to the hearers. We talked of that infinitely-condeſcending and gracious Friend of ſinners, who came from heaven on purpoſe to be crucified for us, and is returned unto heaven on purpoſe to intercede for us. The interceſſion of our bleſſed Lord was the chief ſubject of our diſcourſe, and is a moſt comfortable article of our faith. Becauſe

His interceſſion never ceaſes.—He ſitteth at the right hand of his Father, in an abiding poſture.—Other high prieſts are removed by death; but he ever liveth to make interceſſion for us.—We reſign part of our time to ſleep, and then loſe all attention to our own intereſts; but he is the Keeper of *Iſrael*, who ne-

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ver ſlumbereth nor ſleepeth.—We too frequently forget our God, and neglect to carry on communion with him. But Chriſt has written our names (worthleſs as they are) upon the palms of his hands; and a mother may forget her ſucking child, much ſooner than he will diſcontinue his kind concern for the weakeſt believer.

His interceſſion always prevails.—If *Moſes* was heard, when he made ſupplication in behalf of *Iſrael;* if *Job* was not denied, when he petitioned for the pardon of his three friends; if *Elijah*'s prayer entered into the ear of the Lord God of hoſts, when he requeſted for rain upon the parched earth; ſurely God's dearly beloved Son will not be rejected, when he maketh interceſſion for the ſaints.—The Father loves him, infinitely loves him, and therefore hears him.—He has purchaſed whatever he aſks; purchaſed it by his obedience and death, and therefore cannot but obtain his ſuit.

Perhaps, you will inquire, what it is that Chriſt prays for?—We are informed of this in *John* xvii. He prays, that we may be kept from the evil that is in the world, verſe 15.—That we may be ſanctified through the truth; ſanctified through the word of ſcripture, verſe 17.—That we may be united to Chriſt, and have fellowſhip with the Father by faith, fellowſhip with one another by brotherly love, verſe 21.—That we may be made perfect in his righteouſneſs; preſented without ſpot through his blood; and, at laſt, be with him where he is, to behold his glory, and partake of his joy, verſes 23, 24.

Should you be deſirous of knowing, whether you are in the number of thoſe for whom Chriſt intercedes? You may determine this important point, by the following queſtions.—Do you value above all things, the bleſſings for which Chriſt intercedes?—Do you join your own repeated and earneſt ſupplications to his interceſſion?—And do you rely wholly upon Chriſt's

unſpeakable merits, for the acceptance of all your prayers?—If ſo, be not diſcouraged; Chriſt is your Advocate with the Father. He died for you on the croſs, and pleads his meritorious oblation for you on his throne.

Is not this an ineſtimable bleſſing? If *Hezekiah* deſired the prayers of *Iſaiah;* if *Darius* deſired the prayers of the godly *Jews*, for himſelf and his ſons; how ſhould we rejoice in having the prayers of the exalted Jeſus!—If we are tempted, let this be our ſecurity, *Luke* xxii. 31, 32. If we fall into ſin through the infirmity of the fleſh, let this be our refuge, 1 *John* ii. 1, 2. If under apprehenſions of death, or eternal judgment, let this be our conſolation, *Rom.* viii. 33, 34.

I don't write out the ſcriptures, becauſe I would have you look them out, or even write them out with your own hand. And may the bleſſed Spirit of God write them upon all our hearts!—This will come to you, I hope, on *Chriſtmas* eve. You will talk of this letter, and its contents, to your harveſt-men. I ſhould be glad to be with you, and converſe as we uſed to do, on Chriſt and the kingdom of heaven. None of my flock, I hope, will be filled with liquor, wherein is exceſs; but be filled with the Spirit.—My kind love to your family, and all your neighbours; particularly to your brother *William*, whoſe letter I ſhall anſwer by the firſt opportunity.—Yours, *&c.*

LETTER X.

Dear Siſter, *Stoke-Abbey, June* 19. 1738.

WILL you accept of another letter from your loving brother, who loves your better part, and would fain be helpful to your immortal intereſts? I think I wrote to you when at *London;* I know not what acceptance that letter found, but I can aſſure

you

you it meant nothing but good, ſpiritual benefit, and everlaſting advantage to you.

I hope my **** and **** are more eaſy with regard to me and my welfare. My diſorder is a languor and faintneſs, a feebleneſs and inability for action, which is increaſed or leſſened according to the various temperature of the weather. I bleſs God Almighty, I am not deprived of my appetite to food, neither are my bones chaſtened with pain; ſo that many impute all my complaints to a hippiſh and over-timorous turn of mind, to a diſtempered imagination, rather than a diſordered body.

I write this in a pleaſure-houſe of Mr ****, ſituate upon a high cliff, on the very edge of the ſea. On one ſide a vaſt tract of land extends itſelf, finely diverſified by ſtately trees, floating corn and paſturage for cattle. On the other ſide rolls the great and wide ſea, where go the ſhips, and where is that leviathan, whom the almighty Creator has made to take his paſtime therein. Which way ſoever I look, I meet with footſteps of the divine immenſity. I view thy great and marvellous works, O Lord God omnipotent: I am encountered with ten thouſand arguments, to fear thy tremendous power, and love thy diffuſive goodneſs. Oh! how ſafe are they, who have ſo infinite and mighty a being for their guard! how happy are they, who have ſo inexhauſtibly-rich a God for their portion! But how wretched, dear ſiſter, how miſerably and emphatically wretched, who have ſuch a one for their enemy and avenger! Oh! how can our feeble frame, that ſhrinks at a little light affliction, that is but for a moment,—how can it bear the never-ending vengeance of that prodigious arm, which ſtretched out the heavens, laid the foundations of the earth, and poured out the waters of the mighty deep!

I have been about twenty, or twenty-ſix miles into *Cornwall*, and ſeen wondrous workmanſhip of the all-creating God; ragged rocks, roaring ſeas, fright-

ful precipices, and dreadfully-steep hills. At *Biddeford*, a market-town, about fourteen miles off, I am pretty well known, and am a little esteemed. It is strange to tell, but let it be to the glory of God's free and undeserved goodness, though I am worthy of shame and universal contempt, yet I find favour and good understanding almost where-ever I go.

Mr ****'s house is situate in a fine vale. It is an ancient structure, built for the use of religious recluses, and has an antique, grave, and solemn aspect; before it is a neat spot of ground, set apart for the use of a garden, enriched with fruits, and beautified with flowers. This leads into a curious sort of artificial wilderness made of elms and limes, planted in rows, cut into form, and uniting their branches. In the midst is a fountain large enough to swim in, and a little engine playing the waters. On each side are arbours for shade, in various parts seats for rest; on the right hand runs parallel to it a clear purling brook replenished with trout, on the left a thick grove hanging from the side of a hill: the one serves for a watery mound, the other is a leafy shelter from the north-wind, and both, I think, greatly ornamental. This, you will say, is pleasant; but how unworthy to be compared with those blisful mansions fitting up for the righteous in the heaven of heavens! This, and if there be any other spot a thousand times more delicate, is no better than a howling wilderness, if compared with the regions of paradise. I wish my dear sister would earnestly seek for God's grace to draw off her affections from earthly delights, and fix them there where real, substantial, and eternal joys are to be found, *viz.* on the blissful vision of God, and the fulness of joy that is in his presence for evermore.—Your, *&c.*

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LETTER XI.

Dear Sister, *Biddeford, Dec.* 10. 1740.

THough I am so backward in my compliments, I am most hearty in my wishes, that your spouse and yourself may enjoy abundance of happiness in the married state. I congratulate late, but I shall ever pray, that you may find blessings twisted with the matrimonial bands; and not only live lovingly together, as one flesh, but live holily together as fellow-heirs of the grace of life.

I hope you will both remember the eternal world, which must very shortly receive you: That ere long the nuptial bed must be resigned for a lodging in the grave; and the ornaments of a sparkling bride, be exchanged for the dressings of death. And if, under the frequent view of these serious truths, you study to further each other in faith and holiness,—then will you be true help-meets one to the other: then will you come together, not for the worse, but for the better: then may you trust, that when death shall dissolve the union below, Christ Jesus will bid it commence again above; and continue to endless ages, in the midst of unspeakable delight.

Please to present my humble service to the several Mr ——, and Mrs ——, that still remain in your town; to Mrs ——, and her daughter; Mr —— and his spouse, and Mr ——. Remember me also in the kindest manner to your poor neighbours, particularly those who have Mr ——'s books. May God Almighty give them grace to make a proper and practical use of them! May he sanctify the attentive and diligent reading of them, to their increase in godliness, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ!

When you see my *Collingtree* relations and acquaintance, salute them affectionately in my name. I suppose you will soon see my ——, and ——; present my

my

duty to them, I ſhould rejoice to ſee them again in the fleſh, before any of us go hence, and are no more ſeen. May the Father of our ſpirits, and the Father of the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, our righteouſneſs, prepare us for a happy meeting in the regions of glory, and for the bliſsful viſion of his own adorable ſelf.

There is at *Biddeford*, and has been for a conſiderable time, a townſman of mine, a middle-aged man, born at ——— ; his name is ——. I little thought to find ſuch a perſon in theſe remote parts. It puts me in mind of heaven, where people of every kindred and tongue, of all nations and languages, will form one general and glorious aſſembly. May you and I, dear ſiſter, one day be numbered with thoſe children of God ; and have our lot, our delightful and everlaſting lot, among the ſaints.—I am, *&c.*

LETTER XII.

Reverend and dear Sir, *June* 2. 1747.

CAN you accept the will for the deed ? It was in my heart, long before this, to have made you my beſt acknowledgments ; and not in my heart only, but actually attempted. In *Buckinghamſhire* I remembered my kind and obliging friend, and was with delight ſet down to give vent to my grateful thoughts. But company on a ſudden coming in, arreſted my pen ; and engaging me till I returned from that place, prevented the execution of my deſign. Now, Sir, my heartieſt thanks for your welcome aſſiſtance, deſire your acceptance. And if the utmoſt ſincerity can atone for the delay, my conſcious heart aſſures me, they will not be rejected.—My father is wonderfully recovered. Had he lived in the times of ſuperſtition, for ought I know, his uncommon diſorder might have been aſcribed to witchcraft, and his ſpeedy recovery paſſed current for a miracle. The grave ſeemed to have

have opened her mouth for him. We thought him to be on the very brink of death.

Quam pene furvæ regna Proſerpinæ,
Et judicantem viderit Æacum,
Sedeſque deſcriptas piorum!

But now God has turned, and refreſhed him; yea, and brought him from the deep of the earth again. He lives and regains his ſtrength daily. Laſt *Sunday* he read prayers in his church, and intends next *Sunday* to fill the pulpit.

Mrs ——, I hope, is very well; to whom I beg my humble ſervice may be acceptable. Your dear little ones too, the olive-plants about your table, I truſt are in a flouriſhing ſtate. May the good Lord fulfil his precious promiſe to them, and the children of your honoured neighbour. May he pour his Spirit upon your ſeed, and his bleſſing upon your offſpring, that they may grow up (in knowledge and grace) as willows by the water courſes.—I am juſt now going to our viſitation, held at *Northampton*. I ſhall appear as a ſtranger in our *Jeruſalem;* knowing few, and known by fewer. Methinks there's ſomething auguſt and venerable in a meeting of the clergy; eſpecially, if one looks upon them as ſo many agents for the inviſible God, and envoys from the court of heaven. I hope to be put in mind of that awful day, when the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, that great Shepherd of the ſheep, and Biſhop of ſouls, will make his entrance in the clouds of heaven. Then, at that great, final, and deciſive entrance, may my dear friend receive the approbation of his Judge. May he then be rewarded for his kind offices to myſelf and others, in everlaſting honour and joy.—I am, *&c.*

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LETTER XIII.

Dear Sister, *Biddeford, July* 7. 1741.

AFter a very sultry journey, I arrived safe at *Biddeford*. Here I have been one whole week. At *Bath* and at *Bridgwater* I made a considerable stay. I tarried at each place a couple of nights; was entertained with abundance of civility.

There is a general prospect of a plenteous harvest. The valleys stand so thick with corn, as makes the traveller rejoice, and the husbandman sing. There is great want and scarcity of many things, but there is plenty of fish. Now the dry land is so barren, the waters yield the larger increase. It is observed, to the glory of God's good providence, that now flesh is so dear, fish is uncommonly cheap. Thus graciously does the Almighty, when he locks up one, open another fountain of his beneficence. During my absence from *Biddeford*, a lusty man, in the prime and vigour of life, was carried off by my father's disorder. It is therefore distinguished mercy that our father has enjoyed; such as has been with-held from others, while it has been vouchsafed to him.

I am now far from my dear relations. Friends I have indeed, but not one of my kindred near me. O! that God may be my guide, my protector, and my portion here and for ever. If the Lord, the Lord Jesus Christ be my Shepherd, I shall lack nothing. Unworthy, altogether unworthy of such an inestimable favour, I desire to lye at the feet of his free unmerited grace; seeking what he is ready to give, though I, alas! am most undeserving. And surely we have good reason to hope, and the very best encouragement to seek. For if he gave his life, and spilt his blood for us, will he not much rather give us pardon of our sins, and justification through his righteousness?

I hope my brother —— is in perfect health. I wish him a seasonable and kindly harvest; and wish you both abundance of happiness;—and am, dear sister,

His and yours, &c.

LETTER XIV.

My dear Friend,

I Find you have had Mr —— among you lately: Many, I hope, have found abundant benefit from his preaching, and you in particular. He is a shining light, a choice and illustrious ambassador of Jesus Christ. What a savour of his divine Master does he shed abroad whenever he preaches! such a savour, as many corruptions cannot overcome, nor all the world suppress. *Biddeford*, I hope, has experienced this savour.—Methinks, I now see him in the pulpit, and hear him lifting up his compassionate voice like a trumpet, and proclaiming the acceptable year of the Lord: Methinks, I see him displaying the gospel-standard, and his tongue touched from the heavenly altar, inviting sinners to flock under his shadow; crying, Come, ye simple ones, whom Satan has beguiled, and Christ shall give you light; come, ye wicked ones, whom Satan has enslaved, and the gracious Redeemer shall set you free; come, ye that have been righteous in your own eyes, forsake this refuge of lies, and enter into the ark before the rains descend, and the floods come, which will sweep away every false hope: O! lean not upon a broken reed; build not upon the sinking sand; but upon the Rock of ages; the Foundation laid in *Zion* by the hand of heaven itself. Come unto Jesus, ye ruined and undone sinners, for he has a tender heart that is ever open to receive you; and an arm that is omnipotent to save you. Indeed, my friends, those that know Christ's name will seek no other Saviour, nor desire any other good; all their

bones will cry out, Lord, unto whom ſhall we go, but unto thee? thou only haſt the words of eternal life. They that know Chriſt's free goodneſs, will put their whole truſt in him, and ſeek no other way to the Father of mercy, but through his merit. This is their only claim they have to make for their acceptance, Chriſt died; but for whom did he die, my dear friends? He gave himſelf a ranſom for all; he was lifted up upon the accurſed tree, and out of his ſide came a fountain of blood and water, where every ſinner may bathe and be made clean. The awakened ſons of *Adam*, that feel their miſeries, ſee a fulneſs of merit in one drop of that blood, ſufficient to atone for the guilt of ten thouſand worlds. This fills them with great comfort, although they are vile ſinners. What though they are loathſome beggars, taken from the dunghill of uncleanneſs, that are but now returning from the highways and hedges of every abominable practice? What though they are as beaſts before God, very dogs, like that poor *Syrophenician* woman? yet Chriſt's ſaving kindneſs is ſo great and unbounded, that he caſteth out none who come unto him. Here is conſolation for the trembling ſinner, though he has not a grain of worthineſs in himſelf, yet his Lord has infinite treaſures of unmerited grace. They who believe that Chriſt ſhed his precious blood for guilty ſinners, will chearfully put their truſt in this atonement for pardon. They will ſay, O! they will often ſay, with gratitude glowing in their breaſts, and tears in their eyes; Be it that my ſins are as the deepeſt crimſon dye, and more in number than the hairs of my head, yet the blood of Chriſt cleanſeth from all ſin, and waſheth a filthy polluted conſcience whiter than ſnow. With him there is no ſcanty, but plenteous redemption. Be my debts ever ſo great, ten thouſand times ten thouſand talents; yet the agonies of the once-ſlaughtered Lamb has paid it to the very uttermoſt farthing. They who know his righteouſneſs,

neſs, will put their truſt in it alone for juſtification. If I had the righteouſneſs of a ſaint, ſays one, O how happy ſhould I be? If I had the righteouſneſs of an angel ſays another, I ſhould fear no evil. But I am bold to ſay, that the pooreſt ſinner that believes in Chriſt, has a righteouſneſs infinitely more excellent than either ſaints or angels. For if the law aſks for ſinleſs perfection, it is to be found in my divine Surety. If the law requires an obedience that may ſtand before the burning eye of God, behold it is in Jeſus my Mediator. Should the ſtricteſt juſtice arraign me, and the pureſt holineſs make its demands upon me, I remit them both to my dying and obedient *Immanuel;* with him the Father is always well pleaſed, in him the believer is complete. They who know Chriſt's power, will put their truſt in him for ſanctification of heart and newneſs of life. Though ſin is rooted in my ſoul, and rivetted in my conſtitution, yet Chriſt can purge it out. Though it were twiſted with every nerve of my fleſh, yet he can make the rough tempers ſmooth, and the crooked diſpoſitions ſtraight: the vile affections, like legions of devils, he can root out, and fill every heart with the pure love of God. To which happy ſtate of ſoul may both you and I be brought while here below; that we may be made meet to aſcend to that habitation of God, where nothing unclean can enter.—I am yours ſincerely, *&c.*

LETTER XV.

To his FATHER.

Rev. and Hon. Sir, *Biddeford, Oct.* 1. 1742.

YOur laſt, containing the melancholy account of the death of both my aunts, I received. I hope they died in the Lord, and ſleep in the boſom of Jeſus; and then, truly, they are the happy perſons, and we the objects of pity. They reſt, and have caſt anchor

in the harbour; whereas we are ſtill beating on the ocean, and toſſed in the ſtorm.—If we conſider things impartially, this world is our grave; nor do we really live, till we burſt the fleſhly priſon, and get beyond the viſible ſkies.

In the grave is darkneſs. It is called the ſhadow of death. And what elſe is this wretched world? what, but a ſtate of gloomineſs? a valley of the thickeſt darkneſs? where poor mortals grop in ſpiritual ignorance; and wander up and down, not ſeeing the things that belong to their peace.

In the grave, and among the tombs, we look for phantoms and apparitions.—And what elſe do we meet with here below? A thouſand ſorts of happineſs preſent themſelves to our wiſhes, but are unſubſtantial and phantaſtical all. They are a gay deluſion, and mock our expectations, as one of thoſe vaniſhing forms would baulk our embraces.

The grave is the land where all things are forgotten. The ideas of friendſhip are obliterated, and the dearеſt relatives are remembered no more.—And is not this too true a deſcription of our preſent ſtate? Do we not unaccountably forget Jeſus Chriſt, our almighty Friend, and everlaſting glory, our invaluable heritage? Where is the man that remembers his bleeding Saviour on his bed, and thinks upon him when he is waking? No; the Redeemer's inconceivable love, and the precious benefits of his paſſion, are buried in a deep oblivion.—This world then of darkneſs, apparitions, and forgetfulneſs, is the grand dormitory; fleſh and blood the tomb of our immortal minds.

Naſcentes morimur.

I fear, I tire you, honoured Sir: but becauſe I have no news that you can apprehend or reliſh, I allow my pen in theſe excurſions.—This week I was ſent for to viſit a lady of this pariſh, in the ſame diſorder, that proved ſo fatal to my two aunts. She lay, poor gentlewoman, moſt terribly afflicted, and is now releaſed,

leaſed. It put me in mind of the *Pſalmiſt*'s penitential acknowledgment, which, I think, is never more applicable than in the caſe of the ſmall-pox: When thou, Lord, with rebukes doſt chaſten man for ſin, thou makeſt his beauty to conſume away, like as it were a moth fretting a garment. I ſhall rejoice to hear that you and my mother continue well, under all your trouble and fatigue; and remain,

Reverend and Honoured Sir,

Your moſt dutiful ſon,

JAMES HERVEY.

LETTER XVI.

Dear Siſter, *Biddeford, October 12. 1742.*

I Received your kind letter. It was a pleaſure to hear from *Hardingſtone*, the place which gave me birth, and the place which preſerves my ſiſter.—I am obliged to the Rev. Mr *Roſe* for remembering me, and deſire him to accept my beſt compliments; I hope he will be an inſtrument of doing much good in your pariſh. To ſave ſouls, is the nobleſt acquiſition in the world; infinitely more deſirable, than to find great ſpoils. May this be his honour and happineſs, and may it be my continual aim!

My poor *aunts* are no more, they are gone the way of all fleſh; eternity has received them; their ſtate is now become unchangeable. Oh, that we may be alarmed by their departure, and labour, while we have time, to make our calling and election ſure!

My mother tells me, you have been much indiſpoſed; I ſhall rejoice to hear that you are better. Sickneſs and afflictions are God's call, they are divine admonitions, and warn us not to be fond of the world, but ſet our affections on things above. May the bleſſed Jeſus make them effectual to our ſouls!

I wiſh I had any news to write, that you can underſtand and reliſh. The ſmall-pox is marking many, and

and carrying off ſome among us; it is a privilege of no ſmall value, to be paſt that infectious diſorder: I have often thought, that it is too lively an emblem of the condition of our ſouls, by corrupt nature and evil practice. So polluted, ſo loathſome is our better part, in the eye of uncreated purity, till we are waſhed, till we are cleanſed in redeeming blood. May we earneſtly long to be waſhed in that fountain, opened in our Saviour's ſide, for ſin and for uncleanneſs.

See how our judgments and inclinations alter in proceſs of time! I once thought I ſhould make leſs uſe of the *Spectators* than you; but now I believe the reverſe of this is true, for we read one or more of thoſe elegant and inſtructive papers every morning at breakfaſt; they are ſerved up with our tea, according to their original deſign. We reckon our repaſt imperfect, without a little of Mr *Addiſon*'s or Mr *Steele*'s company. I wiſh Miſs *Becky K*—— an increaſe of happineſs in the change of her ſtate; marriage ſhould augment our joys, and diminiſh our ſorrows. My humble ſervice attends Mrs *K*——, Mr *C*——'s family, and Mr *V*——. My love to my brother, and to yourſelf, concludes all at preſent to be communicated by,

Dear Siſter,

Your affectionate brother,

J. HERVEY.

LETTER XVII.

Rev. Sir, *Bath, Auguſt* 27. 1734.

SUnday laſt, I happened not to be at the Abbey-church, in the afternoon. But converſing yeſterday with a gentleman who was one of your auditors, I deſired to have a ſummary account of your ſermon. And truly he gave me ſuch an account, as both aſtoniſhed and grieved me. You dignified worldly proſperity at ſo extraordinary a rate, and almoſt canonized the proſperous man. On the other hand,

you

you vilified the glorious Jesus in so scandalous a manner, and set the incarnate Godhead to one of the most ignoble and abominable offices. This made me encourage my friend to draw his pen, and send you a word of admonition. And when he declined the task, I could not forbear undertaking it myself. For it would be unkind to you, Sir, to perceive you under such grievous mistakes, and not to warn you of the error of your ways. Nor would it be less unfaithful to your Master, and my Master, to be informed of such preaching, and suffer it to pass current without any animadversion.

If I misrepresent you in any particular, I am ready to retract. And if I have truth on my side, and you, Reverend Sir, have spoken unworthy your sacred office, have dishonoured the divine Redeemer, and perverted his everlasting gospel;—I trust, you also will be so ingenuous, as to condemn that offensive sermon to the flames, and such doctrines to silence and darkness. For I assure you, it is from no ill-natured spirit of criticism, no moroseness of temper, or fondness for contradiction, but from a sincere concern for the interests of true religion, and the honours of our common Lord, that I take leave to suggest the following hints:

I think you first exhorted people to rejoice, when their circumstances were affluent, and their worldly affairs prosperous; you enforced this palatable advice, by the precepts of scripture; and lest it should not be received with a proper welcome, you further urged it upon your hearers, by the example of our blessed Saviour. In opposition to this strain of teaching, permit me to observe,

1. That worldly prosperity is no sufficient cause for a Christian to rejoice.
2. That it is often one of the sorest evils that can befal a person.
3. To sketch out the true nature of scriptural prosperity;

perity; or discover, what is that solid ground for rejoicing, which the oracles of God recommend.

First, worldly prosperity is no sufficient cause for rejoicing, because worldly things are empty and unsatisfactory. That which is lighter than vanity itself, cannot possibly give substantial joy. If we build for contentment upon sublunary things, we rear our edifice upon the sinking sand. You can no more bring satisfaction out of any thing created, than you can carve an image out of the rising smoke, or fill your belly with the east wind. Those that rejoice only (and you, dear Sir, assigned no other cause for rejoicing) because they have abundance of earthly things richly to enjoy, are like some bewildered and benighted traveller, pierced with cold, dripping with wet, that leaps for joy because he finds a glow-worm under the hedge. Alas! this is in nowise able to direct his wandering feet, to light him through the dismal gloom, or to warm his benumbed limbs; no more than it is able to supply the place of the sun, and dart its faint glimmer through the universe.—The pleasures which a superior fortune furnish out, O! how soon do they become stale, and pall upon the appetite! How easily may a thousand accidents snatch them from our embrace, or dash them to pieces in our arms! How certainly must we forsake them in a very little time; and when we have taken a few more pleasant morsels, a few delicious draughts, eat and drink again no more for ever! And what a wretched disproportionate delight is this, for an immortal mind, that is to survive the dissolution of the globe; that is to live unnumbered ages, when all that our eyes have seen, is passed away and gone?

Again, worldly prosperity is no sufficient cause for rejoicing, because a person may possess this, and have neither faith, nor grace. There is no manner of connection between faith and wealth. The poor frequently receive the gospel, while numbers of the rich reject their

their own happineſs. And without faith it is impoſſible to pleaſe God; it is unreaſonable and unwarrantable to rejoice. The believer, indeed, has a permiſſion; has a privilege, yea, has a patent, for rejoicing. The Chriſtian has all joy and peace in believing. All—you ſee here is a monopoly, faith has ingroſſed this precious commodity. None is to be procured, but from her.—And as for grace, talents of gold may be in the coffers, and not one grain of grace in the heart. Thoſe that call whole lordſhips their own, cannot, perhaps, ſay, that they have received the Holy Ghoſt. And while they are deſtitute of this divine principle, I can call them nothing but wretches. You may add illuſtrious, Right Honourable, and Worſhipful, if you pleaſe; but ſtill they are miſerable wretches, unleſs Chriſt, the hope of glory, be formed in their ſouls. The Holy Ghoſt, you know, Sir, is called the Comforter, becauſe it is his amiable office to adminiſter conſolation to his people. He giveth joy, and who can make ſadneſs! But alas! if he withdraw his benign influences, who or what can create ſatisfaction? Silver ſhoes may as well charm away the racking pains of a goutified foot, or golden duſt quench the thirſt of a parched throat, as any worldly abundance, as all worldly plenty, beget real joy, without the communications of the comforting ſpirit.—You forget, Sir, the prayers which you daily offer up in the congregation. In them, you acknowledge that the world cannot give peace. And if not peace, ſurely not joy. If not the fruit, ſurely not the bloſſom. There is no peace, ſaith my God, to the wicked. And all are wicked, who are void of faith, and unrenewed by grace. All run counter to the divine declaration, who bid ſuch perſons rejoice, though they ſhould have every kind of proſperity that a carnal heart can wiſh.

Once more; worldly proſperity is no ſufficient cauſe for rejoicing, becauſe a man may poſſeſs this, and be a child of wrath notwithſtanding. Providence often

ſcatters temporary things among the tents of his enemies. They have children at their deſire, and leave the reſt of their ſubſtance for their babes. Theſe are huſks which the ſwine are permitted to eat. God's deareſt ſervants, thoſe who are heirs of glory, are frequently ſeen to be without any ſhare of them, while the moſt abandoned ſinners have them to the full. *Lazarus* has not a houſe to lay his head in, while the voluptuary dwells in apartments ceiled with cedar, and painted with vermilion. *Lazarus* has not enough to purchaſe one morſel of meat, muſt be beholden to charity for the leaſt crumb of proviſion; while his hard-hearted neighbour drinks wine in bowls, and eats the choiceſt of the flock; is clothed in purple and fine linen, and fareth ſumptuouſly every day.—Who then can rationally rejoice in that which is no pledge of the divine acceptance; which carries with it no proof of our reconciliation to that eternal Majeſty, whoſe ſmile is inconceivable bliſs, whoſe frown is inſupportable wo?—A wealthy and ſucceſsful perſon, if he be conſiderate as well as fortunate, muſt go home from ſuch a ſermon arguing in this manner: "The preacher ſolicits me to rejoice in my worldly goods. But how can I find complacency in ſuch periſhing poſſeſſions, when, perhaps, I may be an outcaſt from heaven, and have no place in that kingdom which endureth for ever? how can I take pleaſure in theſe dainties that repleniſh my table, when perhaps the heavy wrath of God may fall upon me, while the meat is yet in my mouth? This ſumptuous furniture, this glittering equipage, theſe delicious treats, how can I take real ſatisfaction in them, when, for ought I know, a hand-writing upon the wall may be denouncing my doom? If God would lift up the light of his countenance upon me; if I was ſweetly aſcertained of his good-will; then I could rejoice unfeignedly. But as for theſe large revenues, and tides of ſucceſs, that are ſo much extolled by

"the

" the preacher, they may prove like the rich paſtures " that fatten the ox for the knife."

Will you have patience with me, Sir, if I proceed to prove,

2. That worldly proſperity is ſo far from being an adequate cauſe for our rejoicing, that it is frequently one of the ſoreſt and moſt miſchievous evils?—This I am ſure was the opinion of Archbiſhop *Uſher*. That moſt renowned and excellent prelate, in his younger days, had a continued ſeries of proſperity: health, impaired by no attacks of ſickneſs; credit ſullied by no breath of ſcandal; and ſucceſs interrupted by no diſappointment, or diſaſtrous turn. And what emotion did this occaſion in that devout and judicious perſon's mind? did his heart dance within him for joy? did he bleſs himſelf on this behalf? No.—But he was under ſad apprehenſions, leſt God had forſaken him, and given him over to a reprobate courſe. He feared, that his heavenly Father, becauſe he ſpared the rod, hated the child; that not being brought under the diſcipline of providential correction, he was a baſtard, and not a ſon of the Lord Almighty.—How diametrically oppoſite was this way of thinking, to your way of preaching! And whether it was not a very ſober and juſt method of thinking, let the following conſiderations determine.

Worldly proſperity is apt to attach men to earthly things. When ſucceſs ſwells their ſails, and all proceeds according to their wiſh, O! how prone are we to diſregard Jeſus, and everlaſting ages! Many are immoderately fond of the world, becauſe they have ſwam ſweetly down the ſtream of proſperity; who, probably, would have been weaned from its delights, and indifferent to its goods, in caſe they had toiled upon the craggy cliffs of ſome intervening adverſity. When they walk always upon roſes, and meet with no thorns in their paths, the conſequence is an ac-

quiescence in their present station, and remissness in seeking the joys of an invisible world. A contentment in the things that are seen, without any aspiration after the things that are not seen, is the most unhappy condition imaginable, and is generally the offspring of worldly prosperity. And when this worldly prosperity is so highly rated in the calculations of the pulpit, what other effect can possibly attend such lectures, but to glue our affections more closely, and rivet them more inseparably, to these trifles of a day?

Again, worldly prosperity is frequently a mischievous evil, because it is apt to make men proud. They come in no misfortune like other folks, says the *Psalmist*, and this is the cause that they are so holden with pride. Prosperity is often a luscious poison. It bloats and puffs men up with an overweaning opinion of themselves. It intoxicates the mind, and makes it drunk with self-conceit. It prompts people to idolize themselves, and contemn others. The intolerable arrogance of the *Babylonish* monarch, what was it owing to but his vast and uninterrupted successes? He measured his merit by the length of his purse, and challenged a veneration proportionable to the extent of his dominions. This vile, rank weed, thrives in the hotbeds of honour, wealth, and carnal pleasure. Whereas it might never have reared its head, in the colder climate of tribulation, or scantiness of circumstances.

Once more, worldly prosperity is frequently a pernicious evil, because it renders men carnally secure. It case-hardens the mind against all the threatenings, and makes it deaf to the invitations of heavenly wisdom. It is a stupefying potion, and lulls the soul into a fatal forgetfulness of everlasting things. Those that were lusty and strong, in our Saviour's days, joined with the impious multitude in despising the veiled Divinity. But those who were diseased in their bodies, or disordered in their minds, with eagerness fell prostrate at his sacred feet, and implored

his

his healing hand.—*Per ſſent, niſi perii ſſent.*—You cannot but have obſerved various proofs of this remark in the courſe of your miniſtry. You muſt have ſeen many perſons that rejected all your counſel, and would none of your reproof, while they waſhed their ſteps in butter, and the rock poured them out rivers of oil. But how teachable were theſe once refractory worldlings,—how willing to hear the conſolations of the goſpel, when their ſenſible delights were periſhed and gone? How deſirous to be informed of a happineſs in the heavens, which fadeth not, when their carnal pleaſures had made themſelves wings, and were flown away? In the gaiety of their health, and abundance of their plenty, they were ſettled upon the lees of ſupineneſs. But when the ſcene was ſhifted, they cried out with vehemence, What muſt we do to be ſaved? This I myſelf have frequently remarked in the ſhort compaſs of my experience. Men who were like an iron ſinew in their flouriſhing condition, have been impreſſible as melting wax in a reverſe of fortune.

We ſee then, that the proſperity of this world is always dangerous; often pernicious; and too frequently deſtructive. It yields pleaſures that infatuate;—ſweets that are impoiſoned;—delights that ſtupefy. Inſomuch, that a Heathen could ſay, *Nihil infelicius illo, cui nihil infelix contigit.*

Here it may be aſked, Are we to take no comfort in our portion on earth? muſt we become gloomy and melancholy, and go mourning all our days?—Far, far from it. Religion allows us, religion enables us, religion requires us to be joyful. Yea, it gives its faithful adherents to rejoice with joy unſpeakable, and full of glory.—But then it is founded on a principle vaſtly ſuperior to that which you, Sir, thought fit to ſingle out and diſplay. It ſprings from a ſource, and reſts on a baſis, that has no manner of dependence on worldly circumſtances. Which reminds me of another point I am engaged to clear up, *viz.*

The

The true nature of ſcriptural proſperity.—The ſcripture is a ſpiritual ſcheme. Spiritual goods are what it chiefly recommends, and from ſpiritual evils it chiefly deters. Chriſt's words are ſpirit; tending to make men not carnally minded, but ſpiritually minded; to render them ſpiritual in their underſtandings, their affections, their conduct. Inſomuch that one need not ſcruple to affirm conſtantly, That the holy ſcripture never calls that ſtate a ſtate of proſperity, which is not grounded on the favour of God; nor ever encourages people to rejoice in any thing, till they are—reconciled to God,—intereſted in Chriſt,—and renewed by the Holy Ghoſt; which, I think, conſtitute the ſcriptural proſperity; I am ſure, are the ground-work of all happineſs.—Firſt, for reconciliation to God. His favour is better than life. Life itſelf is worthleſs, and, conſequently, all its enjoyments, without this prime fundamental bleſſing. For this cauſe, the Prince of Peace bled to death, that the hand-writing of guilt might be blotted out; that the wrath of God might be appeaſed; and that we who were enemies, might be brought near through his blood. This is the door to all good. Enter in by this gate, O ye ſons of men, or elſe you will inevitably miſcarry in your ſearch after felicity. If you ſeek for bliſs, and bottom not your expectations on this rock, you are ſure to be diſappointed of your hope. I can no more have true comfort in any poſſeſſion, till I have redemption through my Redeemer's paſſion, than that unfortunate captive could rejoice in the royal banquet that was before him, when a ponderous ſword, edged and unſheathed, was hanging by a ſlender thread, and ſhaking every moment over his head.—An intereſt in Chriſt. This is another pillar to ſupport our felicity. Therefore, our bleſſed Lord, directing us in the way to our true good, ſays, Seek ye firſt the kingdom of God, and his righteouſneſs. The everlaſting kingdom of heaven as the end, and the imputed righteouſneſs of

Jeſus

Jesus Christ, as the way. Till the one is our actual possession, and the other our certain reversion, we may look for real satisfaction, but shall find none. Apply to all the creatures; rifle all their charms; taste all their sweets; you will perceive them to be altogether lighter than vanity itself, without an union with Christ, and an establishment in his merits.—Renovation of mind, is another ingredient of the prosperity delineated in scripture. Till the soul be sanctified, it is in a state of grievous disorder; like a body, all whose bones are out of joint. And, oh! what joy can be tasted in such a condition? Till divine grace have the ascendant within us; till the kingdom of God be set up in our hearts; we are in bondage to corruption. Vile affections domineer over us. The devil and our own lusts play the tyrant in our breasts. We are like slaves under a galling yoke, and like lepers under a noisome distemper. Therefore the *Psalmist* says, When I awake up after thy likeness, I shall be satisfied with it. Till thy image be re-instamped upon my heart, I never expect to see good. While we are in the bond of iniquity, we must infallibly be in the gall of bitterness.

This is the prosperity celebrated in the scriptures. Of this every believer is a partaker; and you will please to remember, that every exhortation to rejoicing, which we meet with in those inspired books, are addressed to such persons only. They give not the least invitation to any one, no nor the least licence, to rest satisfied, much less to rejoice, till they are brought into such circumstances of reconciliation with heaven, and renovation of mind. Nor have you, Sir, any warrant to say to yourself, or your people, Soul, take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry, because thou hast much goods laid up for many years. This is the Epicure's creed. The lively oracles bear their testimony against such conclusions. They style all the unregenerate, fools. And to such, worldly

abundance

abundance is not matter for mirth, but matter of ruin. For the prosperity of fools shall destroy them. Be they grand as *Nebuchadnezzar*, in as much affluence as *Ahasuerus*, honoured as *Herod* was by the applauding multitude, yet every page of scripture says to them, as *Jehu* to *Joram*'s messenger, What hast thou to do with peace? And, however some smooth-tongued preachers may flatter and cajole them in their pomp; however they may prophesy smooth things, and solicit them to rejoice on such a footing, as the Lord has not made a ground for rejoicing; yet an apostle bespeaks them in very different language: Go to now, ye rich men, weep and howl. The Teacher sent from God has other tidings to tell them, Wo unto you that are rich, that are full, for ye have your consolation, ye shall hunger hereafter. And, in another world, they may hear this awful admonition sounding in their ears, Son, remember that thou in thy lifetime receivedst thy good things; thy good things, those which thou accountedst good, not that really were good, but only appeared so, to thy distempered judgment, and vitiated taste.

Surely, Sir, it must have been perfectly prudent, or rather absolutely necessary, to caution your audience against so fatal a mistake; especially since they consist of the gay, the grand, the pleasurable. A vigilant minister would certainly give them to understand, that wealth and plenty is, by no means, the prosperity which the Spirit of God commends; that joy, without the loving-kindness of the Lord, is a mere chimera; that none are entitled to this medicine of life, but those who can lay their hand upon their hearts, and say, with a faith unfeigned, My sins are all forgiven, through the atonement of the slaughtered Lamb; my peace is made with the eternal God, and the Spirit of Jesus Christ dwells in me. This is that which justifies, which produces joy. Then, indeed, and not till then, the wise man's advice may be

thy

thy practice: Go thy way, eat thy bread with joy, and drink thy wine with a merry heart, for God now accepteth both thee and thy works. Then thou mayst take comfort in thy earthly accommodations, as so many little appendages of thy bliss; not as the essence which constitutes it; but as the cement, which serves to fill up some little interstices, and renders the whole somewhat more compact. And even, in this case, our blessed Master (who bid his disciples not to rejoice, because the devils were subject unto them, but because their names were written in heaven,) would, probably, caution us not to rejoice, because we have all worldly things copiously to enjoy, but because we are pardoned, we are justified, we are sanctified.

Upon the whole: Suppose worldly prosperity was not oftentimes a most mischievous evil, which it undoubtedly is;—suppose it was a substantial ground for Christian rejoicing, which it really is not;—suppose this was the scriptural prosperity, which notion is, I trust, sufficiently disproved;—in a word, suppose the whole tenor of your doctrine to be true, whereas it seems to be palpably false: yet what good, in the name of wonder, can you possibly propose by such preachments? You cannot but be sensible, that we are all strongly addicted to inferior things. We are already too fond of worldly goods, too impetuous in our pursuit of sensual gratifications. We want, we extremely want a curb to check our career, and you clap a spur on our sides. You employ your eloquence as a provocative, in a case that cries aloud for restrictives. Alas! Sir, you have no occasion to push the headlong torrent!—But I have done with this point; have nothing more to add upon this head, unless it be to recommend to your serious consideration, that alarming verdict, pronounced by infinite wisdom, He that liveth in pleasure, is dead while he liveth; dead to God, dead to grace; a dead Christian, though a living animal. Compare, Reverend Sir, this declara-

tion with the tendency of your doctrine. Then, I assure myself, you will not redden with indignation at these plain remonstrances; but rather (as I should in your case) turn pale with grief, at your past teachings; and tremble with fear, for the consequences of them.

Thus much for your divinity: Now, Sir, if you please for your logic. We have canvassed your doctrine; let us next consider the argument, with which you establish it. This is, if possible, ten thousand times more exceptionable than the tenet itself. For after having told your audience, that the carnal delight, which you so earnestly press to take, is agreeable to the reason of things, is consonant to the designs of providence, you think proper to add, that it is also countenanced by our Saviour's example; since, at a certain marriage-feast, when the wine fell short, he wrought a miracle, and furnished them with a fresh supply on purpose, That the mirth might not die. This was your expression. And, surely, a more shocking one never came from a preacher's lips. Was ever so abject and scurvy a reason assigned, for one of the most illustrious actions? Could any debauched libertine, at a drunken club, have derogated more contumeliously from the dignity of our Lord's behaviour? Jesus, the mirrour of purity, the fountain of wisdom, of whom it is testified, That he did all things well;—this wise and glorious Being is represented, not by an abandoned sot, but by a minister of the gospel, as exerting his omnipotence to prolong a merry bout. O! that it might not be told in *Gath*, or published in the streets of *Askelon!* But—*fugit irrevocabile verbum;* you cannot revoke the words. The only reparation you can make to the injured Jesus, or the offended Christian, is to give us a sermon of recantation, and antidote the poison that has been propagated.

But, I would hope, it is too gross to spread. That the mirth may not die, is an assertion that must startle

every

every hearer. Why, this a common vintner might have prevented, as well as an almighty Being: a few flasks from the tavern would have answered this end. Most ignoble purpose! unworthy, altogether unworthy so august, divine, and admirable a person.—O! what a handle does this yield to infidels for prophane banter! That Jesus should descend from the heaven of heavens, and come into the world, vested with uncontrollable power, on so poor, grovelling, and sordid an errand! That a part of his business, in the state of humanity, should be to guard against the extinction of such idle mirth, as owes its birth to a bottle! The soldiers that stripped our Lord of his apparel, and mocked his sacred person; that spit upon his blessed face, buffeted his divine head, and loaded him with all manner of scurrilities and indignities; did not commit (in my opinion) so flagrant an abuse, as a modern preacher in one of his studied solemn harangues. They took him to be a mere man; they pronounced him a vile man; and, therefore, offered him such opprobrious affronts. But you, Sir, acknowledge him to be God; you know him to be infinitely wise, and yet make him a lackquey to the most errant trifles, a drudge to mens carnal indulgencies.—Suppose both our houses of parliament, after the maturest deliberation, should employ the whole army of the nation, to clear away all obstructions for a butterfly in her flowery range, or to see that a silly kitten goes on unmolested in her sportive gambols; would you extol the wisdom of our senators? would you not cry shame upon their conduct? Now, your assertion is full as depretiatory to the consummate prudence, and exemplary purity of our divine Master: since you set them both on work, joined with his irresistible might, only to furnish out a little more gaiety, a little more laughter, to a set of carousers, whom you describe as pretty well in for it already.

That the mirth might not die! That is, That those who

were already made merry with liquor, might go on in their jovial delights, till they added drunkenneſs to their thirſt. For when people are thus exhilarated, to take freſh draughts, and pour down more wine, muſt indeed make them, as a profeſſed ſcorner profanely expreſſes himſelf, on this very occaſion, more than half ſeas over. So that when you give an evaſive flouriſh or two, and would have your hearers to believe, that you are no advocate for intemperance, it is plain, you are only complimenting the cauſe of ſobriety. This interpretation put upon our Lord's conduct, knocks all ſuch ſham pretences on the head. For, if he wrought the miracle with ſuch a view, and for ſuch ſort of people, all the world cannot clear him from being a promoter of exceſs; and if he did not, all the world cannot acquit you, Sir, from the moſt abuſive miſrepreſentations of your Redeemer.

That the mirth might not die! What could a lewd rake have done at his riotous table, worſe than that which you aſcribe to the pattern of all perfection? My blood grows chill: my thoughts recoil at ſo horrid a poſition. Any gentleman of tolerable ſerioufneſs, when he perceives his friends are got merry with his drink, would rather withdraw the glaſs, than add fewel to the flame. For my part, I ſhould think myſelf an abettor of exceſs, and little better than a pimp for debauchery, if when men are merry in their cups, I ſhould ſupply them with means of driving on the wanton humour. And yet,—be amazed, O ye heavens, and be horribly afraid, O earth!—A miniſter, in the midſt of a thronged congregation, charges this very practice upon the moſt immaculate Lamb of God! —O! Sir, how could he who came to be our ſanctification, adminiſter to our inordinate gratifications? how could he who has injoined us not to make proviſion for the fleſh to fulfil the luſts thereof, be inſtrumental to continue a luxurious revel?—O bleſſed Jeſus, ſurely that is fulfilled which was ſpoken by thy prophet, Thou art

art wounded in the houſe of thy friends. Thy character is debaſed, thy doctrines adulterated, by thoſe who profeſs themſelves adorers of the one, and expounders of the other. O! that ever the Chriſtian pulpit ſhould become a porch to the temple of *Bacchus!* and a Chriſtian preacher act the part of a purveyor for the tippling-houſe!

Do you intend to pleaſe, Sir, or to profit your audience, by theſe admonitions?—You can pleaſe none but men of corrupt minds, whoſe God is their belly, who mind earthly things. You can profit none but thoſe, whoſe heaven is to be found in the juice of the grape. They can ſerve no other end, but to give a ſort of ſanction to their extravagancies. Your lectures, perhaps, may be recollected with applauſe on an ale-bench, and pleaded among a circle of jolly topers. But I aſſure you, Sir, they are heard by the ſerious and devout, with the utmoſt ſorrow, and with equal deteſtation. Their ears are wounded, and their hearts bleed, under the ſound of ſuch *Bacchanalian* doctrines.

May I now be permitted to declare my ſentiments, with regard to that paſſage of ſcripture, which you have ſo unhappily perverted?

As to the mirth you ſeem ſo fond of, there is no mention of it in the ſacred narrative. For Chriſt went not about to ſpread the laugh among his company, but to make them ſerious, ſober, and wiſe unto ſalvation. If he vouchſafed his preſence at entertainments, and ſat at the tables of ſinners, it was with a gracious deſign of inſtructing and converting them in their own houſes. He came to feaſts in the ſame ſpirit, and for the ſame purpoſes, as he came into the world; to turn poor mankind from darkneſs unto light, and from the power of Satan unto God; ſo that none can imagine, when he was in the room, that there could be any thing like that licentious diverſion, which too generally prevails in our merry meetings. If they did rejoice, they rejoiced, doubtleſs, after a

godly

godly ſort. They rejoiced in the precious and inſtructive words, that dropped from Chriſt's lips, as ſweets from an honey-comb. They rejoiced to have ſo divine a prophet raiſed up unto God's people, and to have the honour of ſo illuſtrious a perſonage amongſt them. They rejoiced, without all peradventure, to ſee, and hear, and handle the word of life.

As for that expreſſion, which we tranſlate well drunk.—μεθυσθωσιν,—profane wits, I know, raiſe mighty triumphs upon it: but, in truth, they are *Babel*-buildings, and proofs of nothing but their own folly. They thereby give us to underſtand, that their want of ſenſe is as unqueſtionable, as their malignity to Chriſtianity. For, ſurely, they muſt be full as errant idiots, as they are ſhameleſs ſots, who can offer to fetch the leaſt ſhadow of a plea for riotous indulgences from this paſſage. Since, let the meaning of the word be ever ſo looſe and exceptionable, yet nothing can be concluded from thence, againſt the œconomy and decorum of that entertainment, becauſe the governor ſpeaks only of the uſual cuſtom at other treats. He ſays not a word, good or bad, of the gueſts that were preſent at that bridal-feſtival. It muſt, therefore, be not only precarious, but ridiculous and abſurd, to infer the diſorderly proceedings of thoſe people, from what the ruler obſerves concerning others. I once was acquainted with a worthy gentleman, who frequently invited to his table the young perſons of his neighbourhood; and would take a pleaſure in inſtilling or cultivating in their minds the principles of ſobriety, induſtry, and piety. Now in caſe he had ſaid, after ſupper was removed, "I know very well, my honeſt neighbours, it is cuſtomary with ſome perſons of fortune, both to pleaſe and pride themſelves in making their viſitants drunk. They puſh the glaſs briſkly round, and preſs one bumper upon another, till they ſend their gueſts ſtaggering to bed." But,—now, would any one be ſo ſtupid, as to infer

infer from this acknowledgment of the practice of others, that this was alſo the practice of my friend? Yet this they may do, with as much juſtneſs and ſolidity of reaſoning, as deduce any maxim in favour of exceſs from the ſpeech of the *Architriclinus* (or maſter of the feaſt.)

Evident, I think, it is, that this expreſſion, whatever be its exact import, is in no wiſe referable to the condition of thoſe gueſts; ſo that we allow our adverſaries too much advantage, by admitting any of their remarks upon its ſignification. We ſhould wreſt this weapon out of their hands, which they brandiſh ſo formidably, rather than guard againſt its ſtrokes.—But in caſe it was applicable to them, yet it is moſt monſtrous, to ſuppoſe it ſignificant of the leaſt deviation from temperance. For had we not known the company to be of the moſt exemplary behaviour, and heavenly-minded ſpirit; had they been a parcel of irreligious and lewd fellows, inſtead of the virgin-mother, and the Redeemer's diſciples, yet it would be impoſſible to conceive, that any thing which had the leaſt approach towards ſurfeiting and drunkenneſs ſhould be tolerated, when Jeſus himſelf was in the midſt of them. Before ſo venerable and divine a perſon, they would not dare to allow themſelves in any miſbecoming indulgences, or indecencies of carriage. Beſides, had their inclinations been ever ſo abandoned or impetuous, his eternal power and Godhead would have reſtrained them. He that intimidated the ſacrilegious rabble, when they profaned the temple, and drove them before his ſingle ſcourge; he that ſtruck proſtrate to the ground, a whole band of armed men, only with his word; he that had all hearts in his hand, and could manage them as he pleaſed; would, doubtleſs, have forbid, at this juncture, whatever bordered upon diſſoluteneſs.

Should any one inquire, For what cauſe then did Chriſt work this miracle, if not to revive the dying mirth?

mirth?—I answer, several noble reasons are assignable and obvious.

One; To furnish a supply for fresh guests, which on those occasions were continually pouring in; that the feast might be prolonged to its usual period, and all that came might be moderately refreshed. For I can by no means imagine, that this fresh supply was intended for those who had cheared themselves already with a sufficient quantity. This indeed is what your sermon takes for granted, or else your application of this fact is frivolous and impertinent. But I promise myself, when you give it a second consideration, you will wonder, how so unworthy a thought could come into your mind; and be sorry, that it should ever proceed from your lips; since it is so entirely repugnant to the whole character, conduct, and preaching of our Lord Jesus.

Another reason might be, To reward the married pair, for their hospitality to himself and his followers: To give early notice to the world, that none should be losers by shewing kindness to him or his: That every piece of respect paid to Jesus, and every kindness exercised towards his family, should meet with a full recompense of reward. Thus did he prepare an extensive fund for those, who had forsaken houses, lands, relations, and their earthly all, for his sake; prepare a fund for their subsistence, by disposing people to entertain and accommodate them, when they should be sent forth, without staff, or scrip, or money in their purses.

Another cause, and that which is remarked by the holy historian, was, To manifest forth his glory; to give a most conspicuous display of his Messiahship. He opened, as it were, his commission, and shewed his divine credentials: which was done with perfect propriety, in a public manner, before more spectators than his own attendants: And whatever effect it might have upon others, it confirmed the faith of his disciples.

diſciples. Seeing this inconteſtable proof of his miſſion, it is ſaid, They believed on him; and were thenceforth inviolably attached to his perſon and miniſtry.

Other reaſons may be ſuggeſted, and thoſe exceeding ſound and uſeful; ſuch as point out a noble and deep ſignificancy in this miracle; make it rich with divine and ſpiritual meaning; and, upon this footing, a more delicious feaſt for our ſouls, than wines of the fineſt flavour, and moſt generous quality, are to our animal nature.

For inſtance; it might ſignify the ſuperior richneſs of thoſe comforts, which his goſpel was introducing into the world: That they exceeded thoſe broached by *Moſes* and the law, as much as the pure blood of the grape excells the water of our common wells: That his fleſh and blood would be a ſovereign ſource of alacrity and conſolation to his people; gladden and revive their hearts, like ſome exquiſite cordial; ſtrengthen and invigorate their minds, like the beſt-bodied wines.

This particular ſeaſon of a marriage-ceremony, was probably choſen, in order to intimate the neceſſity of being eſpouſed and united to Chriſt, before we can be partakers of theſe evangelical delights. Divorced we muſt be from our old huſband, the law; divorced from the covenant of works; and no longer wedded, by ſelf-opinionativeneſs, to our own righteouſneſſes; but married, by the bond of a lively faith, to that everlaſting Bridegroom, in order to taſte thoſe comforts, and have our ſhare in thoſe joys.

A reaſon fixed upon by our church is, That Chriſt would hereby put an honour upon the matrimonial ſtate; by gracing the ſolemnity with his ſacred company, and performing his firſt public miracle on this occaſion. A fine admonition this, to render us more than ordinarily ſolicitous, to have the favourable concurrence of Jeſus, both when we deviſe, and when we take, ſo important a ſtep. Becauſe the tranquil-

lity and happineſs of our ſubſequent life depends, very much, on this alteration of our condition.—That we ſhould, by all means, marry in the Lord; and implore his ſpiritual gracious preſence at the wedding; which will improve the advantages, and ſanctify the enjoyments, of that comfortable ſtate; will, as it is delicately figured out in the metaphor, turn our water into wine.

It might alſo be intended to remind us, That the comforts, even of animal life, were recovered by the ſecond *Adam*, as they were forfeited by the firſt *Adam*. When our firſt parents were guilty of rebellion againſt their Maker, they loſt all right to the valuable productions of nature. This, indeed, was their dowery originally ſettled upon them; but by their diſloyalty it became confiſcated. Juſtice ſeized upon their inheritance, and vengeance ſaid, Curſed be the ground for your ſakes. Chriſt, in this exigency, immediately interpoſed; took off the attainder, and reſtored to poor *Adam* and his poſterity, the precious fruits of the earth. Theſe bleſſings, derived from Chriſt's mediation, were very properly recognized at a wedding; becauſe, ſtraightway after the marriage of the firſt couple, they were alienated and ſequeſtered.

This, Sir, is a way of expounding our Redeemer's miracles, well worthy your conſideration, if not your imitation. In this light they appear, not barely ſo many witneſſes of his being the Meſſiah, but ſo many living mirrours of his mediatorial mercies. In which we diſcern a moſt expreſſive figure of thoſe ſpiritual good things, which we extremely want, and may fully enjoy thro' Jeſus Chriſt.—The marvellous things brought to paſs by the agency of prophets, apoſtles, and holy men of old, were indiſputable vouchers for their being ſent of God. But our Redeemer's works had a farther excellency, and anſwered a diviner end. They held forth and preſented, even to the ſenſes, a moſt ſtriking pattern of thoſe ſpiritual bleſſings, which

ſinners may enjoy thro' their Saviour.—Thus, when he cured the man born blind; what did this ſignify but his healing the blindneſs of our underſtandings, and pouring the day of his glorious goſpel upon our internal ſight?—When he made the poor paralytic ſtrong and vigorous, that was not able to turn himſelf on his bed, or to uſe his limbs; what a lively emblem was here, both of our diſeaſe, and his ſovereign help? Of our diſeaſe, whereby we are utterly impotent to do a good work, or think a good thought: of his ſovereign help, whereby we are enabled to do all things, through Chriſt ſtrengthening us; enabled to believe through his grace, and to mortify our corruptions through his Spirit.—Was not the filthy leper, a true picture of our loathſomeneſs, through original defilement, and actual tranſgreſſions? and when our Redeemer diſdained not to touch this noiſome creature, and make him perfectly clean; how appoſitely did this image point out the condeſcenſion of his goodneſs, in undertaking our redemption; and the efficacy of his blood in accompliſhing our purification?—I might go through the whole ſeries of our Lord's miracles, and diſcover in them a moſt ſignificant and complete portraiture of all manner of ſpiritual bleſſings.—But the foregoing inſtances ſhall ſuffice. From theſe hints, we may diſcern an adorable depth of deſign; unſearchable treaſures of contrivance, as well as beneficence, in thoſe operations of his mighty power. Which noble peculiarity gives them a vaſt pre-eminence above all the miracles in *Egypt*, and the wonders in the field of *Zoan*; renders them ſo many fine repreſentations of the deliverances and privileges, enjoyable through our ever-bleſſed Immanuel; in a word, renders them a kind of goſpel that addreſſes itſelf even to our eyes; and ſo moſt wiſely calculated, both to direct our hopes, and ſtrengthen our faith, in the incarnate God.—I am, *&c.*

LETTER XVIII.

Dear Madam, *Bath*, 1743.

AT *Bath* I have tarried thus long, but purpoſe to ſet forward for my father's houſe, if I live till next week; and if I have as good a journey thither, as I had to this place, I ſhall have cauſe to be very thankful to that gracious Providence, which bleſſes our going out, and our coming in; which protects us from wrong and robbery; from evil accidents and dangers as with a ſhield. I hope you, Madam, and Mr ——, are well; and ſhould rejoice to hear of your both being partakers of that which I wiſh you to enjoy; and none can be ſaid truly to enjoy health, but thoſe who improve it to the purpoſe: all others waſte health; embezzle it; ſquander it away; all but thoſe who uſe it as a precious opportunity of making their calling and election ſure. We have had moſt delicate weather for the harveſt; a bleſſing, which I don't doubt has been vouchſafed to you as well as to us; an univerſal bleſſing! and ſuch as will prove very extenſive. We ſhall feel the good effects of it, all the year round, when winter freezes the air, and turns the earth into iron, or buries it under heaps of ſnow. We ſhall be refreſhed even then with the productions of the fruitful ſeaſon. O! that our hearts may be filled with gratitude, as our barns are with plenty. The harveſt puts me in mind of the end of the world; then our bodies ſhall ariſe out of the duſt of the earth; having lain a while under the clods and ſeen corruption, they will then ſpring up incorruptible and immortal, an amazing multitude, like the blades of graſs, or the ears of corn, innumerable.

The huſbandman in harveſt, receives a reward for all his toil. The labours of the preceding year are amply recompenſed by the rich fruits of increaſe. And the conſummation of all things will be the great retribution-day; then the Chriſtian receives the end

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of his faith, even the salvation of his soul; then the riches he has coveted, will be bestowed in the favour of the seeing him who is immortal, invisible; whose loving-kindness is better than life. He will see the desire of his soul, and the fruits of his Saviour's sufferings, and sit down everlastingly satisfied. The husbandman rejoices in harvest, this is his time of festivity and delight. They joy before thee, saith the scriptures, according to the joy of the righteous; they will look up and rejoice, to behold their Redeemer coming in the clouds of heaven, and all the holy angels with him; then will they look down and rejoice to see the wicked world burning, in which they were tempted; rejoice to see all their enemies put under their feet; and when the doors of heaven are left open, then shall they enter triumphantly into that city of the living God, and everlasting joy will be upon their heads, and reign with Christ for evermore. Into this exceeding great and eternal bliss, I wish you, Madam, and your husband, an abundant entrance, and remain his and your, *&c.*

LETTER XIX.

Dear ——, *Weston-Favell*, 1744.

I Promised —— to send the remainder of her letter, in a few lines to you. Either she may transcribe from you, or you from her, in order to complete the little essay.—I left off, I think, somewhere hereabouts.—*But spiritual interests are infinitely more valuable.* For those, therefore, Christ will provide more abundantly: if they want knowledge, he will not only give them his divine word, but his enlightening Spirit, to lead them into all truth.—If they are poor, he will give them the fine gold of his obedience: he will say to them as the father said in the parable, Son, all that I have is thine. Are they wounded? he will

will give them the healing balm of his precious blood; this will cure the wound which sin has made in the soul; and make the bones which have been broken, to rejoice. Are they naked? he will clothe them with the robe of his own righteousness; they shall appear before the God of gods in the garments of this their elder brother. Are they weak? his strength shall be made perfect in their weakness; he will work in them both to will and to do of his good pleasure. When they die, he has provided a flight of angels to attend their departing souls, and conduct them to his own compassionate arms; he has provided mansions of glory, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens, for their future reception. He has provided a fulness of joy and pleasures for evermore, for their final portion and inheritance.

Oh! what ample provision is here! this is indeed good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over.—What can needy creatures want, which Jesus does not supply? Justly was it once said by an eminent believer, Jehovah Jireh, The Lord will provide. Let this be the language of our hearts in all our needs.

The hen comforts her winter-brood; she screens them from the inclemencies of the weather. She spreads out her wings, and forms a canopy over them; this affords them a house to lodge in, and a bed to sleep on; no velvet is softer, no blankets are warmer; here they are cherished and refreshed; here they find heat when they shiver with cold, are dried when they come dropping with wet.

Jesus also comforts his poor people; he is called the consolation of *Israel:* Come unto me, says the merciful Redeemer, all ye that labour, and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest; all ye that are weary, and I will refresh you. He is afflicted in all their afflictions, and is as ready to succour them, as a man is to allay the

the anguish of his own smarting flesh. He is the good, the inconceivably-good Shepherd, whose bowels yearn with the tenderest compassion, when his lambs are fatigued or distressed; he even lays them in his bosom. —Every thing but Jesus speaks terror, and creates dismay to his little flock. But this compassionate Shepherd leads them forth besides the waters of comfort. The world lays many a snare for their feet; the world persecutes and hates them. In the world they must have tribulation; but Christ says, Be of good cheer, I have overcome the world, and will make you partakers of my victory; because I have conquered, ye shall conquer also. The law lays dreadful things to their charge; the law is the ministration of condemnation; the law thunders out threatenings: they are rebels, says that righteous law; they have transgressed my precepts; they deserve to suffer all the curses denounced against the disobedient and ungodly. But Christ gently whispers, Be of good courage, my people, take sanctuary in your Mediator, I have answered all the demands of the law: if it requires punishment, I sustained torments unutterable; if it insists on blood, I satisfied it with divine blood; with every drop of my heart's blood; so that there is no condemnation to them that are interested in me. If it called for righteousness, I submitted to its authority; I performed every jot and tittle of its commands, and thereby brought in a perfect and everlasting righteousness. Lay hold on my obedience; receive this from my free grace, and the law has nothing more to charge against you; for the righteousness of the law is fulfilled in them that believe, though the devil tempts and distresses the children of Jesus.—He not only tempts, but accuses them, aggravating and calling aloud for vengeance; cries, Down with them, down with them, even to the dust. But Jesus graciously steps in, baffles the accusation, arrests the judgment, and says, I have died to save them from going into

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the pit; for I have found a ranſom; if they have ſinned, I have taken them upon myſelf; if they have multiplied tranſgreſſions as the ſtars of heaven, my Father hath laid on me the iniquities of them all. They are my redeemed ones; they are bought with my blood. I cannot loſe my purchaſe; if they are not ſaved, I am not glorified.

Such ſweet truths ſent home upon the poor ſoul, muſt be very comfortable and reſtorative to the drooping ſinner; more refreſhing and gladdening to the conſcience, than the feathers of the hen are to her feeble ſtarving brood.

Upon the whole, let us imitate the chickens, by truſting in Jeſus for all we want or wiſh; let us lean upon our Beloved in all our progreſs through this wilderneſs; expect to be furniſhed entirely out of his fulneſs; look for protection from his almighty arm. Depend upon proviſion from his inexhauſtible treaſures; and for comfort, from a growing ſenſe of our intereſt in him.

Let this be the habitual language of our heart.—Bleſſed Lord, I am weak and wretched, ſurrounded by a multitude of dangers, and defiled by a thouſand corruptions, O defend me by thy eternal power. Let thy almighty arm be over me. Let thy Holy Spirit be ever with me; never leave me to my enemies; never give me up to my own blindneſs and impotency, for I flee unto thee to hide me: on thee I depend to break every ſnare of temptation that endangers me from without, to mortify every ſeed of corruption that pollutes me from within. I am poor and needy, bleſſed Jeſus, do thou provide for me. Since I muſt one day give an account of myſelf to God; let thy blood waſh away my guilt, and drown all my tranſgreſſions. Since I muſt, ere long, ſtand before him whoſe eyes are as a burning fire, O! clothe me with the robes of thy righteouſneſs, the garments of ſalvation, that I may be holy and blameleſs

blameleſs in his ſight. Since I muſt quickly die out of this miſerable world, provide me an entrance into thine own everlaſting kingdom; and while I continue in this world, provide me with grace ſufficient for me, that I may live like thine elect, and adorn the goſpel of God my Saviour.

I am often diſtreſſed; miſgiving thoughts and anguiſh of mind, makes me hang down my head like a bulruſh. Through fear of death, and dread of eternal judgment, my joints are ſometimes ready to ſmite one againſt another; but O! holy and moſt merciful Saviour, be thou my ſupport. Pour the oil of gladneſs into my inner man; give me the joy of thy ſalvation: the law condemns me, but do thou juſtify me; my own conſcience writes bitter things againſt me, but do thou whiſper to my ſoul, Be of good cheer, thy ſins are forgiven thee. The roaring lion often terrifies me; but O! thou good and faithful Shepherd, let thyſelf comfort me. Let me know and feel, that I am thine, and then nothing ſhall pluck me out of thy hands.

This was wrote before my late illneſs. You ſee from hence, that you my friends at *Biddeford* have been on my thoughts, though they have not of late been addreſſed by way of letter; and I ſhall always ſay, that whether we are ſick or in health, the Lord Jeſus Chriſt may be the ſtrenth of our hearts, and our portion for ever.—I am, *&c.*

LETTER XX.

Dear ——,

IT is our duty continually to ſing hoſanna to the King of *Iſrael*, who treadeth all enemies under his feet. He can tread them down like clay in the ſtreets, or caſt them out as lightning from heaven. Nothing is impoſſible to him; they who know Chriſt's faithful-

neſs and truth, will put their truſt in him; they will hang upon him every moment, as the feeble child in the arms of the indulgent mother, for grace to ſtrengthen and enable them to withſtand the devices of that enemy of ſouls, who is ſeeking every moment to deſtroy the weak believer, the babes in Chriſt.—Satan ſays, with that wicked one in *Exodus*, I will purſue them with inconceivable malice and rage, I will overtake and tear them in pieces like a lion; I will lay ten thouſand ſnares in their way, and if it be poſſible, bring them under the dominion of ſin, and after that into the damnation of hell.—The believer replies, Thou wouldſt effect this, O thou enemy of all godlineſs. I know thou wouldſt effect it with as much eaſe, as a feather is borne down by a ſweeping whirlwind, was I left a moment to myſelf; but my ſtrength do I aſcribe unto my incarnate God. The bleſſed Jeſus has undertaken for my ſecurity; he watches over me every moment, and nothing can pluck me out of his hands. He hath ſaid, who ſhall diſannul it? that ſin ſhall not have dominion over me; he will preſerve me by his almighty power unto ſalvation. Let all my adverſaries know aſſuredly, that my ſafety is not in myſelf.—But as the hills ſtand round about *Jeruſalem*, even ſo ſtandeth the Lord round about his people, from this time forth for evermore.

Whoever attempts the ruin of a ſoul that is ſtaid on Jeſus, muſt wrench the ſovereignty from the hand of Omnipotence, and cauſe unſhaken faithfulneſs to fail. So long as all things in heaven and earth, and under the earth, do bow, and obey the Lamb that was ſlain; ſo long as Chriſt is a God unchangeable, and faithful that cannot lie, ſo long ſhall a poor feeble worm that truſts in him, be ſecure from apoſtaſy and perdition. O! the bleſſings, the comforts that ſpring from a right knowledge of Jeſus! Richer bleſſings I cannot wiſh! greater treaſures I cannot enjoy nor poſſeſs. This, this alone is that knowledge which St

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Paul valued above all other accompliſhments or acquirements; in compariſon of which, he counted all things elſe no better than droſs or dung. O! let my dear *Biddeford* friends beg of the Father of lights to ſend out the Spirit of wiſdom and revelation, that I may be filled with the knowledge of him, and of Jeſus Chriſt whom he hath ſent; and in return both they and you, my friends, may be aſſured of the moſt hearty and repeated prayers of—

Your ſincere friend, *&c.*

LETTER XXI.

SIR, *Weſton-Favell*, *November* 16. 1745.

IT is not eaſy to expreſs the ſatisfaction I received from your agreeable and uſeful converſation this afternoon. I rejoice to find, that there are gentlemen of genius, learning, and politeneſs, who dare profeſs a ſupreme value for the ſcriptures, and are not aſhamed of the croſs of Chriſt. I congratulate you, dear Sir, on this occaſion; and cannot but look on a mind ſo principled, and a heart ſo diſpoſed, as a very choice and diſtinguiſhing part of your happineſs. Was I to frame a wiſh for the deareſt and moſt valuable friend on earth, I would earneſtly deſire, that he might grow daily in this grace, and increaſe in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jeſus Chriſt. And when my pen begs leave to aſſure you, that this is my unfeigned wiſh for ——, it only tranſcribes what is deeply written on my heart.

This brings the dedication and the preface, which are to introduce a little eſſay, entitled Meditations among the tombs, and Reflections on a flower-garden, in two letters to a lady. I hope, Sir, in conſequence of your kind promiſe, you will pleaſe to peruſe them with the file in your hand. The ſeverity of the critic, and the kindneſs of the friend, in this caſe, will be in-

ſeparable.—The evangelical ſtrain, I believe, muſt be preſerved; becauſe, otherwiſe, the introductory thoughts will not harmonize with the ſubſequent; the porch will be unſuitable to the building.—But if you perceive any meanneſs of expreſſion, any quaintneſs of ſentiment, or any other impropriety and inelegance, I ſhall acknowledge it as a very ſingular favour, if you will be ſo good as to diſcover and correct ſuch blemiſhes.

I hope, Sir, my end in venturing to publiſh, is an hearty deſire to ſerve, in ſome little degree, the intereſts of Chriſtianity, by endeavouring to ſet ſome of its moſt important truths in a light, that may both entertain, and edify. As I profeſs this view, I am certain, your affectionate regard for the moſt excellent religion imaginable, will incline you to be concerned for the iſſue of ſuch an attempt, and therefore to contribute to its ſucceſs, both by beſtowing your animadverſions upon theſe ſmall parts, and by ſpeaking of the whole (when it ſhall come abroad) with all that candour which is natural to the Chriſtian, and will be ſo greatly needed by this new adventurer in letters, who is, *&c.*

LETTER XXII.

Dear Sir, *Weſton-Favell, Nov.* 19. 1745.

I Cannot forbear making my grateful acknowledgements for your moſt obliging letter. You could not poſſibly have imagined any thing more agreeable to my inclination, than the propoſal you are pleaſed to make of admitting me to your acquaintance and converſation. I accept your kind offer, Sir, with thankfulneſs, with joy; and ſhall moſt gladly cultivate a friendſhip, which is not only perfectly innocent, but remarkably elegant and improving. Eſpecially, ſince you are pleaſed to permit the diſcourſe to turn upon thoſe points, which it is my duty to ſtudy, and my delight

delight to contemplate. Nor ſhall I forget, how much I am indebted to your condeſcenſion for this favour; but ſhall always bear a reſpectful ſenſe of the diſtinguiſhed rank, and ſuperior abilities of my worthy friend.

Indeed I am particularly delighted with ſuch interviews, as ſerve to enlarge our knowledge, and refine our affections; ſuch as have an apparent tendency to render us more uſeful in our preſent ſtations, and to ripen us for future happineſs; ſuch was that which I lately enjoyed in your company. This is a feaſt of reaſon; a feaſt of truth; and, I muſt own, has charms for me, infinitely ſuperior to all the impertinent amuſements of modiſh chat, or the mean gratifications of the bottle.

When I have been aſked to ſpend an afternoon with gentlemen of a learned education, and unqueſtionable ingenuity, I have fancied myſelf invited to take a turn in ſome beautiful garden; where I expected to have been treated with a ſight of the moſt delicate flowers, and moſt amiable forms of nature: when, to my great ſurpriſe, I have been ſhewn nothing but the moſt worthleſs thiſtle, and contemptible weeds. To one who has ſo often been diſappointed, it muſt be peculiarly pleaſing to find the ſatisfaction which he has long ſought in vain. This I make no doubt of obtaining, if I may be permitted to be a third perſon in the interview, when you and Mr —— ſit together in ſocial conference.

I beg leave to return my thanks for your ingenious remark upon a ſentence in the eſſay towards a preface; and alſo to expreſs my entire ſatisfaction in your motion for conſidering more attentively the ſpiritual intereſts for the poor patients in the hoſpital. At preſent, it is undeniably plain, that much more aſſiduous and effectual care is taken of their temporal, than of their eternal welfare. With pleaſure I ſhall join in concerting ſome proper method to rectify this miſ-

conduct

conduct, and with a real alacrity ſhall execute (as far as I ſhall be enabled) any expedient which you ſhall judge conducive to the recovery and health of their ſouls.

I almoſt repent, that my pen has intruded, perhaps, in the midſt of important buſineſs, and ſtole ſo much of your valuable time.—But now I have done:—and ſhall only repeat, what agreeable views I form from the proſpect of your future acquaintance, and what an addition it will be to my happineſs to be owned and regarded, as, *&c.*

LETTER XXIII.

SIR, *Weſton-Favell, Dec.* 17. 1745.

I Admire your remarkable regard for truth, and that noble greatneſs of ſoul, which ſcorns to ſacrifice conſcience to intereſt, and cannot ſtoop to receive temporal honours on ſuch ignoble terms. Your conduct reminds me of a moſt amiable peculiarity in the upright and religious man's character, as it is drawn by the inſpired writers; with which you cannot but be particularly pleaſed, as it ſo exactly correſponds with your own; ſuch a one, ſays the royal preacher, feareth an oath; ſuch a one, adds the ſweet ſinger of *Iſrael*, ſpeaketh the truth from his heart.

The thirty-nine articles I have more than once ſubſcribed; and as I continue ſtedfaſt in the belief of them, as you are pleaſed to aſk my opinion relating to ſome ſeemingly-exceptionable tenets contained in them, I moſt readily ſubmit it to your conſideration; not, Sir, in the capacity of a caſuiſt, who would attempt a ſatisfactory anſwer to your queſtions; but only under the notion of a ſincere friend, who would freely diſcloſe his whole ſoul, and entertain no one ſentiment, but what ſhould be communicated to a valuable acquaintance.

"You are a good deal puzzled about the equality

"of

" of the Son with the Father, in *Athanaſius*'s ſenſe." —I own, it is no wonder, that we ſhould be ſomewhat ſtaggered at this myſterious truth; eſpecially if we indulge a wanton curioſity, and inquire after the *quomodeity* of the doctrine; if nothing will content our buſy minds, but a clear comprehenſion of this particular, they will never be brought to acquieſce in this article. But, if they dare venture to believe the expreſs declarations of infinite wiſdom, and wait till a future ſtate for a full evolution of the myſtery, their aſſent will ſoon be determined.

I once thought a very ſtriking proof of this ſcriptural doctrine might be derived from the known properties of a mortal child, conſidered in compariſon with the parent. Is not the ſon as perfect a partaker of all the conſtituent parts of the human nature as the Father? Are not the children of this age poſſeſſed of the ſame endowments of body and mind, as their fathers in the preceding age? Whatever eſſential excellencies belong to the one, may with equal truth be predicated of the other. And if the ſon, in this our inferior world, be in all points equal to his progenitor, why ſhould we not ſuppoſe, that the glorious Son of God is equal, in all reſpects, to his almighty Father?

But I chuſe to forbear all ſuch fond endeavours, to explain what, to our very limited apprehenſions, is altogether inexplicable. I rather receive ſcripture for my teacher, and give up my ſentiments to be formed and conducted by that infallible guide. In ſcripture there are abundance of texts, which, in the moſt explicit terms imaginable, aſſert the Son to be God. Now, if he be God, he cannot have any ſuperior: inferiority evidently deſtroys divinity: inferiority, in any inſtance, is inconſiſtent with the notion of a ſupreme Being. So that every text in ſcripture which aſcribes a divine nature to the bleſſed Jeſus, ſeems to ſpeak all that *Athanaſius* maintains, concerning the abſolute,

ſolute, univerſal equality of the Son with the Father.

In what reſpects can the Son be ſuppoſed inferior? Are not the ſame honours given to the Son as are paid to the Father? The Pſalmiſt mentions two of the incommunicable honours which are due to the ſupreme Majeſty. Both which, he declares, are, and ſhall be, addreſſed to the Son: Prayer ſhall be made ever unto him, and daily ſhall he be praiſed. This adorable perſon is the object of our worſhip throughout the whole litany. In the doxologies of our liturgy, the ſame glory is aſcribed to all the three infinitely-exalted perſons of the Trinity. I take notice of this, not as a concluſive argument, but only to hint at the uniform judgment of our reformers on this important head, and to point out their particular care to inculcate, with inceſſant aſſiduity, this belief upon the members of their communion.—Are not the ſame works aſcribed to the Son, as are aſcribed to the Father? God, the ſovereign and ſupreme God, (according to the periphraſis of a Heathen poet, *Cui nihil ſimile, aut ſecundum*,) often declares his matchleſs perfections, by referring mankind to his aſtoniſhing works of creation. And is not the Son the Creator of the univerſe? All things were made by him, is the teſtimony of one apoſtle; and, He upholdeth all things by the word of his power, the depoſition of another. —Is not the ſame incommunicable name applied to the Son? Jehovah is allowed to be a name never attributed, throughout the whole ſcripture, to any being, but only to the one living and true God; who only hath immortality, who hath no ſuperior, none like him in heaven or earth. But this title is the character of the incarnate Son. If we compare *Moſes* and St *Paul*, we ſhall find that Chriſt is Jehovah, *Numb.* xxi. 6. with 1 *Cor.* x. 9. This argument, I think, is not common; and, I muſt own, has had a great influence in ſettling my judgment, ever ſince I was appriſed of it.—Another proof was ſuggeſted in the morning-leſſon for the day,

day, *If.* xlv. 23. compared with *Phil.* ii. 10. It is the Lord in the prophet, that infinitely-wise God who manifesteth, even from ancient time, the dark and remote events of futurity; who peremptorily declares, that there is no God besides him, consequently none superior in any degree to him; yet this most sacred person, who in the prophet's text has the attributes of incomparable perfection and unshared supremacy, is, in the apostle's comment, the Redeemer.

I fancy all those texts of scripture, which seem to you, Sir, so diametrically opposite to this doctrine, will, upon a renewed examination, appear referable only to the humanity of our Saviour. If so, they cannot affect the point under debate, nor invalidate the arguments urged in its support.

After all, I believe, here lies the grand difficulty. Sonship, we take for granted, implies inferiority. Sonship implies the receiving of a being from another; and to receive a being is an instance of inferiority.—But, dear Sir, let us repress every bold inquiry into this awful secret; lest that of the apostle, *α μη εωρακεν εμβατευων*, be the lightest censure we incur. What is right reasoning, when applied to the case of created existence, is little less than blasphemy when applied to that divine person, who is from everlasting to everlasting, the great I AM.—The generation of the Son of God is an unfathomable mystery. A prophet cries out with amaze, Who can declare his generation? and if we cannot conceive it, how can we form any conclusions, or determine what consequences follow from it?—Here it becomes us not to examine, but to adore. If we know not how the bones do grow in the womb of her that is with child, how shall we be able to state the nature, or explain the effects of a generation, inexpressibly more remote from our infinite apprehensions?

Upon the whole; since the scripture has given us repeated and unquestionable assurances, That Christ is God; since common sense cries aloud against the

abſurdity of ſuppoſing a God, who has a ſuperior; ſhall we reject ſuch poſitive evidences of revelation, and be deaf to the ſtrongeſt remonſtrances of our reaſon, merely becauſe we cannot conceive, how the Sonſhip of the Redeemer can be compatible with an abſolute equality, in all poſſible perfection, to the Father?

It need not be hinted to ——, that this doctrine of the Divinity, conſequently of the equality, of the ſacred TRI-UNE, is not merely a ſpeculative point, but has a moſt cloſe connection with practice; and is admirably fitted to influence our lives, in the moſt powerful and endearing manner. That it is no leſs inſeparably connected with the grand bleſſings of acquaintance from the guilt, and delivery from the bondage of ſin; bleſſings of unutterable and infinite value, without which the children of men are of all creatures moſt miſerable; which yet we cannot reaſonably hope to enjoy, if any of thoſe illuſtrious perſons concerned in accompliſhing the great redemption, be ſuppoſed leſs than divine.

The 18th article, you add, is another objection to me, which begins thus, They alſo are to be had accurſed, *&c.*—This, as you obſerve, ſeems harſh. Yet the harſhneſs is not ours, but the apoſtle's. I imagine, this is no more than a tranſcript of St *Paul*'s awful and ſolemn declaration, tranſmitted to the *Galatian* converts, and denounced againſt their corrupting teachers. Be pleaſed, Sir, to peruſe attentively that whole inſpired letter, and eſpecially to conſider chap. i. verſes 6, 7, 8, 9. Then permit me to appeal to yourſelf, whether our article profeſſes any doctrine, which is not clearly eſtabliſhed in that moſt excellent epiſtle; or whether our church uſes more ſevere terms, than the apoſtle thinks proper to thunder out, in that memorable paſſage?—But might not this doctrine have been palliated a little, or the tremendous ſanction ſomewhat ſoftened? No; we muſt not add to, or diminiſh from,

from, our inviolable rule. A faithful ſteward of the divine myſteries, muſt declare the whole will of God, in its full extent and latitude; together with the fearful conſequences of preſumptuouſly oppoſing it, as well as the bleſſed effects of cordially receiving it.

I am not ſurpriſed, that this procedure ſtartles ſome, and offends others. St *Paul* ſeems to have foreſeen this event; and therefore apologizes for himſelf, ſhall I ſay? rather declares his unalterable reſolution of perſiſting in this practice; *q. d.* I am ſenſible, that ſuch teachings will be far from palatable to too many of my hearers; I am aware alſo, that to threaten the divine anathema on every oppoſer of this doctrine, will be ſtill more offenſive. But ſhall I deſiſt on theſe conſiderations? ſhall I accommodate the ſtandard doctrines of heaven to the depraved taſte of the age; or be ſolicitous to make them ſquare with the favourite ſchemes of human device, only to avoid creating diſguſt in ſome minds? No, verily: I preach what unerring wiſdom has revealed, not what capricious man has dreamed, (αρ᾽ι γαρ α θρωπυς πειθω, η τον Θεον;) and therefore dare not vary one jot or tittle from my high orders. My buſineſs is principally to pleaſe God by a faithful diſcharge of my commiſſion, not to ingratiate myſelf with men, by modelling my doctrine in conformity to their humours; (ζητω ανθρωποις αρεσκειν;) and therefore I muſt, I muſt deliver it, juſt as I received it.

But why do I offer to illuſtrate theſe texts? Your own meditations, I perſuade myſelf, will diſcern, much more clearly than I can repreſent, that the compilers of our articles are no other than the echo of St *Paul*: or rather that they only ſet their ſeal to the doctrines of Chriſt, which he taught; and approve that verdict of heaven which he has brought in. This conſideration will acquit them from the charge of harſhneſs of expreſſion, or uncharitableneſs of ſentiment.

Your objections thus proceed. I believe that every one will be ſaved, who acts up to the beſt of his know-

ledge.—I almoſt durſt venture to join iſſue with my friend upon this footing; and undertake to prove, from this very poſition, the univerſal neceſſity of believing in Chriſt for ſalvation. Becauſe, I think, it is indiſputably certain, that there is no man living, who has in all points acted up to his knowledge: and if he has ſwerved, in any inſtance, from his known acknowledged duty, how ſhall he eſcape puniſhment, without an atonement? *Video meliora proboque, deteriora ſequor*, is what the moſt vigilant and upright of mortals have, at ſome unhappy moments, felt to be true. If ſo, how ſhall they ſtand before that righteous God, who will not accquit the guilty, without an intereſt in the great expiation?—But, I preſume, your propoſition is to be taken in a more qualified ſenſe; it means, that thoſe who ſincerely, though not perfectly, in the main courſe of their life, and as far as the infirmities of a frail nature admit, act up to their knowledge; that theſe ſhall be ſaved, even without their application to the merits of a Saviour. If this opinion be true, I own, it muſt be very unſafe to ſubſcribe our articles.

When this point is in diſpute, I apprehend, we are to confine it to thoſe who live in a goſpel land, where opportunities of knowing the good will of God preſent themſelves every day, every hour. As for the Heathens, who lye under unavoidable and irremediable ignorance of the bleſſed Jeſus, they are out of the queſtion. They, I think, ſhould be remitted to God's unſearchable wiſdom and goodneſs. There may be uncovenanted mercies for them, which we know nothing of. It ſeems to be a daring and unjuſtifiable raſhneſs, for us to determine one way or the other, with regard to their final ſtate. This, however, is plain from the oracles of revelation, that it will be more tolerable for thoſe poor Gentiles in the day of eternal judgment, than for thoſe inexcuſable infidels, who have heard and diſobeyed the glorious goſpel.—

The

The controverſy then concerns thoſe only who have the Bible in their hands, or the voice of the preacher ſounding in their religious aſſemblies every ſabbath-day. Theſe, dear Sir, I cannot think will inherit ſalvation, though they act with ever ſo much ſincerity, according to their knowledge, unleſs they add to their knowledge, faith.

Perhaps, what we call their knowledge, is no better than downright and wilful ignorance: the light that is in them is darkneſs. Perhaps, they never took any pains to get themſelves informed in the glorious peculiarities of the goſpel. If ſo, their conduct is one continued diſobedience to the divine commands, which require us to ſeek for wiſdom as for hid treaſures; which charge us to ſearch the ſcriptures (ερευναν) as narrowly, as induſtriouſly, as the ſportſman ſearches every ſpot of ground, beats every tuft of graſs, in order to ſtart the latent game. In this caſe, what we call their knowledge is really blindneſs itſelf; and their want of true knowledge cannot be their plea, becauſe it is evidently their neglect and their ſin.

But ſuppoſe theſe perſons have ſearched the ſcriptures, and yet are perſuaded, that there is no ſuch need of a Saviour's merits. Shall we condemn them in theſe circumſtances? We do not preſume to ſit as their judges, or to ſcatter at our pleaſure the thunders of eternal vengeance; we only declare, what ſentence is paſſed upon them by the ſupreme Diſpenſer of life and death. He has made it an adjudged caſe, he has paſſed it into an irrepealable law, That whoſo believeth not in the Son of God, whoſoever perverſely perſiſts in ſeeking ſome other method of ſalvation, and will not fly to that Redeemer whom infinite Wiſdom has ſet forth for a propitiation, this man is condemned already.

Will it be ſaid, That a man cannot help aſſenting to what he is thoroughly perſuaded to be right; And if a Deiſt from his very ſoul believes, that morality alone is the way to life; and that the notion of

of a Redeemer, to make ſatisfaction, and procure juſtification, is a religious chimera; ſhall we blame ſuch a one for following the genuine dictates of his mind?—I anſwer, ſtill I anſwer, That we muſt abide by the determinations of that ſovereign God, whoſe judgments we are ſure is according to truth. He has ſaid, nor can all the cavils and ſophiſtry in the world ſuperſede the decree, He that believeth not, ſhall be damned. Be not ſhocked, Sir, at the ſeeming ſeverity of the doom. Rather let us be ſhocked, be greatly aſtoniſhed, at the prodigious hardineſs of thoſe more than ſteely hearts, which can attend to ſuch terrors of the Lord, and not be perſuaded to come to Chriſt; nay, what is enough to make heaven and earth horribly amazed, can hear of theſe terrors, and yet regard them no more than a puff of empty air.

Nor will it extenuate the crime of unbelief, to allege in behalf of the infidel, that he is actually convinced, in his own conſcience, that his ſentiments are right. He may be ſo; and yet be inexcuſably guilty notwithſtanding: for is it not owing to his own fault, that he has imbibed ſuch ſentiments? Is it not through his own criminal miſconduct, that he has contracted ſuch a perverſe habit of thinking? Has he not indulged ſome darling vice, which has clouded his underſtanding? Or inſtead of obeying the great mandate of heaven, This is my beloved Son, hear ye him; has he not attended ſolely to the arguings, deductions, and diſcernment of his own reaſon, as his only guide to heavenly truth? A drunkard verily thinks, (if he thinks at all,) that he does nobly in committing inſults on quiet harmleſs people. But will his bare thinking, that he acts gallantly, acquit him at the bar of equity? Perhaps, in his preſent condition he cannot help fancying, that his actions are becoming, and that he does well to be turbulent and outrageous; but though he cannot help the effect, might he not have avoided the cauſe of his phrenzy? Methinks, this compariſon will

will hold good, if applied to the caſe of many ſcorners of the goſpel; who think contemptuouſly of Jeſus Chriſt, and who really apprehend they do nothing amiſs in depretiating his obedience and death. But I fear, they have brought upon themſelves this deplorable delirium or intoxication of their underſtandings, either by voluptuouſneſs and debauchery, or elſe by ſelf-conceit, and the moſt odious arrogance of mind; which, in the eſtimate of the Holy One of *Iſrael*, is no better than ſpiritual idolatry.

For my part, I am aſſured, that God has vouchſafed us the means of obtaining the knowledge of himſelf, and of Jeſus Chriſt, whom he hath ſent; it is equally certain, that he has commanded us to acquaint ourſelves with him, and be at peace; it is no leſs undeniable, that whoſoever ſeeks this ineſtimable knowledge, by a diligent application to the ſcriptures, by a child-like dependence on the teachings of the divine Spirit, by humble prayers to be led into all truth, and by doing the will of God, ſo far as he is acquainted with it,—whoſoever ſeeks, by uſing theſe means, ſhall find, ſhall come to the knowledge of the truth, and be ſaved. If therefore perſons are ſo negligent, as not to uſe theſe methods; ſo audacious, as to contemn them; ſo haughty, as to imagine they have no need of them; they may juſtly be given over to their own deluſions, and yet be moſt righteouſly puniſhed as ſuicides of their ſouls.

But ſtill it is pleaded in vindication of the good-natured, civilized infidel, That there is no turpitude in his life; that his behaviour is every way irreproachable.—As to the turpitude of his life, when compared with the converſation of other men, I have nothing to ſay: but ſurely, there is the higheſt iniquity in his principles and conduct, when compared with the revealed will of God; which is the only criterion of truth, the only ſtandard of excellence. God has commanded all men to honour the Son, even as they honour

honour the Father; but these people protest against the divine edict, and say, with those insolent subjects in the gospel, We will not have this Jesus to reign over us. God has solemnly declared, That all mankind are become guilty before him; that by the works of the moral law, no flesh living shall be justified; that there is no Mediator between God and men, but the man Christ Jesus; but these people maintain, in defiance of this declaration, that they themselves are able to make up matters with their offended Creator; and can, by their own honest behaviour, secure a title to everlasting felicity. God, of his superabundant and inconceivably-rich goodness, has given his Son, his only Son to suffer agonies, to shed blood, to lay down an infinitely-precious life for them; yet these people, like those impious wretches that crucified the Lord of glory, deride his agonies, trample upon his blood, and though he has redeemed them, they speak lies against him *.—Let us see then a little part of the evidence summed up against the spirit of unbelief. It implies stubbornness, which is as the sin of witchcraft; rebellion, which is as iniquity and idolatry: it implies the most assuming pride, which is an abomination to the Lord: it implies the vilest ingratitude, even amidst the most unbounded beneficence; and the voice of nature has poclaimed, *Ingratum si dixeris, omnia dixeris.* —Let the impartial considerer decide, whether the heart of these persons be right before God; or whether their conduct, when brought to the test of that word which is to judge them at the last day, be so unblameable as is frequently pretended.

Enough has been said of the two first points; I fear more than enough to fatigue your attention. However, I now draw in the reins, and promise not to put your patience upon doing such tedious penance any more.

There is another expression in the paragraph relating

* Hos. viii. 13.

ting to the 18th article, which, since you expect my undisguised opinion, I cannot dismiss without a remark. When the scriptures say, that men shall be saved thro' the name of Christ, you suppose, Sir, they mean, that Christ made a general atonement for original sin.—Whereas, I apprehend, that such texts import abundantly, I had almost said infinitely more. Thus much, I think, at least they must amount to in their signification; that if we are saved from the guilt of our offences, it shall be only through the all-atoning blood of the Lamb of God If we are made acceptable to that awful Majesty who dwelleth in light inaccessible, this our justification shall be in consideration of the obedience and righteousness of the beloved Son; if we obtain the Spirit of sanctification, are enabled to deny all ungodliness, and to live soberly, righteously, and godlily in this present evil world, it shall be through the intercession of Jesus our great High Priest, by whom alone the Holy Ghost is vouchsafed to unworthy polluted sinners. All this I take to be included in that word, of most rich and comprehensive meaning, salvation; and since it is affirmed, that we are saved by Christ, I should think, it must signify, that we obtain all these glorious and invaluable benefits through that all-sufficient Mediator.

As to Christ's making an atonement for original sin, that surely was but one single branch of his important undertaking: Wo, wo be to the inhabitants of the earth, if he did no more. Our actual sins, the sins of our heart, the sins of our life, our sins of omission and sins of commission; and all these sins, which are more in number than the hairs of our head, heavier with horrid aggravations than the sand of the sea, he bore in his own body on the tree. He was wounded for our offences; he was bruised for our transgressions; and the Lord laid on him (not only the innate depravity, but) the actual iniquities of us all.

Your next objection lies against the 13th article;

namely, Works done before the grace of Chriſt, are not acceptable to God:—Is the meaning of this tenet, you aſk, that men are made with a natural incapacity of doing any thing but ſinful actions?—I anſwer, this is not ſo properly the meaning of the article, as a moſt cogent reaſon to eſtabliſh it. Only let it be ſtated a little more clearly, and it is no inconſiderable argument in proof of the doctrine. Men were not made by their Creator with this incapacity, but they have brought it upon themſelves by their own fault. By their original ſin they have contracted a moſt miſerable depravity, and have made themſelves προς παν εργον αγαθον αδοκιμους. Since therefore we can do no good work, before we are renewed by the grace of Chriſt, it ſeems to follow, that we can do no work acceptable to God, till this renovation take place.—This, you obſerve, does not ſeem ſo agreeable to charity, as one could wiſh.—Worthy Sir, our notions of charity are not to be the rule of the divine acceptance either of perſons or things. If the doctrine be agreeable to the declarations of unerring wiſdom, we are to admit it with all readineſs, and rather conclude, that we miſtake the nature of charity, than that the ſcripture miſtakes the terms of the Almighty's acceptance and favour.—You know, Sir, it is the expreſs voice of ſcripture, that without faith it is impoſſible to pleaſe God; and till the Spirit of Chriſt be ſhed abroad in the ſoul, it poſſeſſes no ſuch ſacred principle as true faith.—It is a favourite apophthegm of our divine Maſter's, That a corrupt tree cannot bring forth good fruit. And are not all that ſpring from the ſtock of fallen *Adam*, corrupt trees, until they are ingrafted into the true olive-tree, and partake of his meliorating and generous juices?—I ſhall only mention one more ſcriptural oracle; an oracle delivered not from *Delphos*, no, nor from mount *Sinai*, but immediately from heaven itſelf: This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleaſed. I have always thought theſe words are to be taken in an excluſive

ſenſe;

ſenſe; as though the everlaſting Father had ſaid, I am well pleaſed with the apoſtate race of *Adam*, only as they are reconciled through my beloved Son: unintereſted in him, no perſons are the objects of my complacency; unrecommended by him, no actions are the ſubject of my approbation. If this be the genuine ſenſe of the paſſage, it will ſerve at once to confirm the article, and to obviate the objection derived from the deficiency and remains of pollution, that cleave even to the performances of a believer.

I am glad you have ſatisfied yourſelf with relation to the article, which touches upon predeſtination and election. Theſe are ſublime points, far above the ſolution of our low capacities. But, for my part, I am no more ſurpriſed, that ſome revealed truths ſhould amaze my underſtanding, than that the blazing ſun ſhould dazzle my eyes. That ſuch things are mentioned in the inſpired writings as real facts, is undeniable. I ſhould renounce my very reaſon, if I did not believe what Omniſcience atteſts, even though it ſhould imply what is altogether inexplicable by my ſcanty conceptions. And why ſhould the incaverned mole, whoſe dwelling is in darkneſs, whoſe ſight is but a ſmall remove from blindneſs, why ſhould ſuch a poor animal wonder, that it cannot dart its eye thro' unnumbered worlds, or take in at a glance the vaſt ſyſtem of the univerſe?

Your ſenſe of the 20th article is exactly mine. The authority you mention, is, in my opinion, all the authority which the church, the rulers and governors of the church, can reaſonably claim, or regularly exerciſe, in matters relating to faith. Theſe rulers have power, as you juſtly obſerve, to ſettle, in conformity with what they conclude to be the meaning of ſcripture, the nature and extent of their own creed; and none, I think, can fairly deny them a right to determine, what points of belief ſhall be the indiſpenſable terms of enjoying communion with their ſociety. But as

for I know not what privilege of interpreting ſcripture, in ſuch a manner, as that it ſhall be contumacy to examine, before we credit, or heterodoxy and hereſy to controvert their expoſition; this is an authority which I cannot allow to any man, or body of men, now in the world. At this rate our faith would be built upon the deciſions of the church, not on the determinations of the inſpired word; and, conſequently, be not of God, but of men.

Could I have imagined when I ſet pen to paper, that it would have run ſuch extravagant lengths! Bear with my prolixity, dear Sir, and excuſe my freedom; or rather, if I have ſaid any thing in too free a ſtyle, you muſt charge it upon your own condeſcenſion and candour, which have emboldened me to deliver my ſentiments without the leaſt cloak or reſerve.

But I muſt not, I dare not, cloſe, without acting as becomes a miniſter of the goſpel; without reminding my valuable friend, that the inſpiration of the Almighty giveth wiſdom; that a man can receive nothing, much leſs an acquaintance with the myſteries of the Redeemer's kingdom, unleſs it be given him from above. To this Fountain of wiſdom, and Father of lights, let us make humble, earneſt, daily application. Then ſhall we ſee the things that belong to our peace, and, as it is moſt emphatically expreſſed by the ſacred penman, know the truth as it is in Jeſus.—I am, *&c.*

LETTER XXIV.

Dear Sir, *Weſton-Favell, Jan.* 10. 1745-6.

HOW arduous, and how momentous, is the taſk you have aſſigned me! A ſenſe of its difficulty and importance almoſt deterred me from venturing ſo much as to attempt it. A cordial friendſhip inſtigated, and a conſciouſneſs of my own incapacity checked, for ſome time, my fluctuating mind. At length the bias inclined to the ſide of the former; my reluctance,

reluctance, urged by the request of a friend, gives way; and now I am fully determined.—Determined, to what? To enter the lists against the adversaries of the Trinity? More particularly to appear as the champion for the personality and divinity of the Holy Ghost? With a view of resting the grand debate on the dexterity of this pen? No; Sir, I form no such romantic schemes; I renounce any such undertaking; I am only determined to lay before you the thoughts which have occurred, since I have received your last letter; and this, on the condition of having them returned to the secrecy of my closet, after you have passed your judgment, and bestowed your corrections upon them.

In managing this controversy, shall I say? or rather in pursuing this inquiry, it behoves us humbly to apply to the great Father of lights for direction. They shall all be taught of God, says the prophet; this promise we should humbly plead at the throne of grace, and, in chearful dependence on its accomplishment, proceed to examine, with a modest and reverential awe, the mysterious points before us. Whoever rejects this key, and yet hopes to be admitted into the treasures of heavenly knowledge, acts altogether as imprudent a part, as if he should expect to attain a masterly skill in mathematics, and at the same time neglect to inform himself of the first principles of that admired science. When a divine person is the object of our consideration, then surely it becomes us, in a more especial manner, not to lean to our own understanding, but, like little children, to rely on the teachings of that all-wise Spirit, whose nature, dignity, and attributes, we would devoutly contemplate.—You will, perhaps, take notice, that I anticipate what is to be proved; and take it for granted, that the Holy Ghost is indeed God. I would only observe from this remark, how naturally we wish, how almost unavoidably we conclude, that person to be really God, who is appointed to lead us into all truth.

Let

Let us now, Sir, if you please, address ourselves to the inquiry, whether the Holy Spirit is a real person, —whether that person is very God?—and, these particulars being discussed, it may be proper to examine briefly the most material of Mr *Tomkins's* objections. —But to whom, to what shall we apply, in order to find the satisfaction we seek? To reason, and her naked unassisted dictates? Hardly can reason guess aright with relation to the things that are before our eyes; much less can she determine, with any certainty, concerning the unsearchable depths of the divine nature, those τα βαθη του Θεου. We have in the word of revelation an infallible oracle. To this let us direct our search. To the decision of this unerring standard, let us inviolably adhere; however it may surpass our comprehension, or run counter to our fond prepossessions.

Here we may possibly ask, Is not the Spirit of God, by a common metonymy, put for God himself?—I own I have sometimes been inclined to hesitate on this question. When it is said, My Spirit shall not always strive with man, and, Grieve not the Holy Spirit of God; I have never thought these passages a sufficient proof of the personality of the blessed Spirit, though (if I mistake not) commonly urged in support of the doctrine. These, I apprehend, might fairly be interpreted of grieving God himself, and resisting the tender gracious overtures of his mercy. Conformably to that parallel form of speech, where it is said by the inspired writer, *Paul's* spirit was grieved, *i. e.* without all dispute, *Paul* himself was inwardly afflicted.

Again; perhaps, the Spirit of the Lord may be nothing more than a particular modification or exercise of a divine power resident in the Deity. For instance, when it is said, in the prophetic language, Not by might, nor by force, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord; or by the evangelical historian, The Holy Ghost was upon

upon him. Are not these texts nearly equivalent, in point of signification, to those scriptural expressions, The right hand of the Lord bringeth mighty things to pass, The inspiration of the Almighty giveth understanding? Is not this the meaning of the former passage, Not mortal strength, but God's omnipotent aid giveth victory in the battle, and success in every undertaking; and this the import of the latter, The communications of infinite wisdom enlightened his mind in an extraordinary manner?

Were there no other scriptures which concerned themselves in this debate, I should be ready to give up the point. But there are several, which most strongly imply the personality of the Holy Ghost, though they may not assert it in positive terms. It is true, we meet with no such term as personality in sacred writ; but if we find the thing signified, it is in effect the same. No one can shew me the word resurrection in the whole Pentateuch, but will any one presume to maintain, that this doctrine is not to be proved from the books of *Moses*? Our Lord's famous reply to the ensnaring interrogatory of the *Sadducees*, must for ever silence such a suggestion. And this we may further learn from his method of arguing, that it is not only proper, but our duty, to deduce truths, by fair consequences, which the text may not explicitly speak.

Be pleased, Sir, to consider the apostolical benediction, The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Ghost, be with you all. If we allow the apostle to understand the true import of language, must it not follow from this passage, that the Holy Spirit is a real person, and distinct from the Father and the Son? Otherwise, would not the sacred writer, ought not the sacred writer, to have expressed himself in a different manner; to have said rather, The fellowship of his, or the fellowship of their spirit?—The form of administering baptism is another text of this nature: In the name of the Father,

and

and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghoſt. It is evident; I believe, it is allowed by all, that the two firſt are real diſtinct perſons; and is there not equal reaſon to conclude, that the laſt-mentioned is a perſon alſo? Suppoſe you ſhould endeavour to diſtinguiſh three perſons in your diſcourſe, what other language would you uſe than this?—I dare ſay, Sir, you are ſenſible, that one ſcripture-proof, if plain in its ſignification, and inconteſtable in its evidence, is as valid, as deciſive as one thouſand; becauſe one ſuch proof bears the ſtamp of infallible wiſdom and infinite veracity. Therefore, was there no other hint in all the inſpired volumes, but theſe pregnant words which compoſe the form of baptiſm, this ſingle proof would be ſufficiently ſatisfactory to my judgment.

I ſhall take leave to refer you to a few more evidences, and tranſcribe only the following: There are three that bear witneſs in heaven, the Father, the Logos, and the Holy Ghoſt, and theſe three are one. But this, we are told, is a ſurreptitious text; foiſted by the bigotted eſpouſers of a certain favourite ſet of doctrines.—The only reſource this of our oppoſers, when their caſe becomes deſperate, when conviction flaſhes in their faces; when every other ſubterfuge fails; then the pretence of ſpurious, and interpolated reading is trumped up. It is not to be found, they cry, in ſome very ancient copy; perhaps, the *Alexandrine* MS. acknowledges no ſuch paſſage. But this I muſt be allowed to queſtion: I dare not take our adverſaries bare word; eſpecially, ſince ſome of the declared enemies of orthodoxy are not the moſt exemplary for truth and integrity. However, granting that there may be no ſuch text in the *Alexandrine* MS. for my part, I ſhould not ſcruple to abide by the univerſal teſtimony of all editions, in all countries, much rather than to give up myſelf implicitly to the authority of a ſingle MS. I ſhould think it much more reaſonable to conclude, that the tranſcriber of that particular

ticular copy, had, through overſight, dropt ſome ſentence, rather than to charge all the other copies with forgery, and the editions of all ages with a groſs miſtake. Conſider, Sir, not only the apparent difficulty, but the moral impoſſibility of corrupting the ſacred books in that palpable manner, which this objection would inſinuate; at a time when every private Chriſtian valued them more than life, and ſpent no day without a diligent contemplation of them; at a time, when each particular ſect read them conſtantly in their public aſſemblies, and watched over the genuineneſs of each text with a moſt jealous eye. Would it be an eaſy matter to introduce a ſuppoſitious clauſe into an ordinary will, after it had been ſolemnly proved at *Doctors Commons*, and one authentic copy preſerved in the archives? If this is ſcarce poſſible, how much more unlikely is it, that any one ſhould be able to practiſe ſo iniquitouſly upon the inſpired writings, when not one only, but unnumbered copies were depoſited in the moſt vigilant hands, and diſperſed throughout the world?

I ſhall only deſire you to conſult thoſe other ſcriptures, *Rom.* xv. 16, 30. *John* xvi. 13, 14, 15. which, without heaping together a multitude of other proofs, ſeem to put the matter beyond all rational doubt. In the laſt of thoſe places, you will take particular notice, that the writer ſpeaks of the Holy Ghoſt in the maſculine gender. How could this conſiſt with propriety of ſtyle, upon any other ſcheme than ours? The expreſſion ſhould have been *it*, not *he*, if the Holy Ghoſt were a divine energy alone, and not a real perſon. Nay, it is remarkable, that though πνευμα be a neuter, yet the hiſtorian varies the gender, and gives us a maſculine relative, οταν ελθη εκεινος, Εκεινος εμε δοξασει; and on what principles can this conſtruction be accounted for, or juſtified, but by allowing the Holy Spirit to be a perſon? This, I think, is an obſervation of ſome conſequence; and, there-

fore, accurate writers ſhould beware of uſing the word *it*, and rather chuſe the prououn *him*, when ſpeaking of this divine Being.

The mention of divine Being reminds me of our ſecond ſubject of inquiry, *viz.* Whether the Holy Ghoſt is very God?—Here I ſhould be glad to know, what kind or degree of evidence will ſatisfy the inquirers. If we are ſo far humble and impartial as to prefer the declarations of an unerring word, to the preconceptions of our mind; I think, there is moſt ſufficient proof afforded by the ſcriptures. Whereas, if we bring not theſe diſpoſitions to the ſearch, it will be no wonder, if we are bewildered; if we are given up to our own deluſions; nay, it will be no incredible, no unprecedented thing, for God to hide theſe myſteries from ſuch (in their own opinion) wiſe and prudent ones, while he reveals them to (men endued with the ſimplicity and teachableneſs of) babes.

Is that Being truly God, who is poſſeſſed of divine attributes? This queſtion, I imagine, every body will anſwer in the affirmative. So that if it appears, that the Holy Ghoſt is inveſted with the incommunicable attributes of the Deity, our aſſent will be won, and our diſpute at an end.—Is it not the prerogative of the all-ſeeing God, to ſearch the heart, and try the reins? *Jer.* xvii. 10. and is not this the undoubted prerogative of the bleſſed Spirit? 1 *Cor.* ii. 10.—Is eternity an attribute of God, and of God only? *Deut.* xxxiii. 27. ὁ μονος ἐχων ἀθανασιαν, 1 *Tim.* vi. 16. This is clearly the property of the Holy Ghoſt, who is ſtyled by the author of the epiſtle to the *Hebrews*, The eternal Spirit, *Heb.* ix. 14. —Is wiſdom, underived, eſſential wiſdom, a character of God, called by the apoſtle μονος σοφος θεος, *Jude* 25.? This is the illuſtrious character of the Holy Ghoſt. He is the Spirit of wiſdom and revelation, *Eph.* i. 17. In conſequence of which ſacred excellency, he is able to lead his people into all truth.—Is Omnipreſence a neceſſary proof of Divinity? If ſo, the Holy Ghoſt challenges it upon this claim; for thus ſaith the inſpired

ſpired poet, Whither ſhall I go then from thy ſpirit? *Pſal.* cxxxix. 7.—Is omnipotence a ſufficient atteſtation of the Godhead of the Holy Ghoſt? He that enableth mortals to control the powers, to alter the courſe, to ſupercede the fundamental laws of nature; can he be leſs than the Lord God Almighty? Yet St *Paul* declares, that his ability to work all manner of aſtoniſhing miracles, for the confirmation of his miniſtry, was imparted to him by the Spirit, *Rom.* xv. 19.—If any farther proof is demanded, be pleaſed to conſider, with an unprejudiſed attention, that very memorable paſſage, *Matth.* xii. 31, 32. Surely, from an attentive conſideration of this text, we muſt be conſtrained to acknowledge, that the Holy Ghoſt is ſtrictly and properly God. Otherwiſe, how could the ſin againſt him be of ſo enormous a nature, ſo abſolutely unpardonable, and the dreadful cauſe of inevitable ruin?—St *Paul*, in his firſt epiſtle to the *Corinthians*, (vi. 19.) addreſſes his converts with this remarkable piece of inſtruction, Your body is the temple of the Holy Ghoſt. The ſame apoſtle, writing to the ſame believers, in his ſecond epiſtle, (vi. 16.) has the following expreſſion, Ye are the temples of the living God. Who can compare theſe texts, and yet be ſo hardy as deliberately to deny, that the Holy Ghoſt and the living God are one and the ſame? Beſides, if theſe two ſcriptures, viewed in conjunction with each other, did not aſcertain the Divinity of the bleſſed Spirit, the very purport of the expreſſion, Ye are temples of the Holy Ghoſt, ſufficiently evinces it. It is certain, that the very eſſence of a temple, or, to ſpeak in the terms of the logician, the *differentia conſtitutiva* of a temple, conſiſts in the reſidence of a Deity. The inhabitation of the higheſt created Being cannot conſtitute a temple; nothing but the indwelling of the one infinite, almighty Lord God. Since, therefore, the indwelling of the Holy Spirit renders the bodies of Chriſtians temples, it ſeems to be a clear caſe, that he is truly

God.—Another text, a text never omitted when this point is under debate, and a text, in my opinion, ſingly ſufficient to give a final deciſion to the doubt, is in *Acts* v. 3, 4. where the perſon ſtiled Αγιον Πνευμα in one verſe, is expreſsly declared to be Θεος in the next. Now, can we imagine, that an evangeliſt, under the guidance of unerring wiſdom, could write with ſuch unaccountable inaccuracy as the deniers of this article muſt maintain? Were this ſuppoſition admitted, I ſhould almoſt begin to queſtion the inſpiration of the ſacred books. At this rate, they would ſeem calculated to confound the judgment, and elude the common ſenſe of the readers. For to ſpeak ſo frequently of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghoſt,—to ſpeak in ſuch language as we always uſe in diſtinguiſhing various perſons,—to aſcribe to them ſeverally ſuch attributes as, by univerſal acknowledgment, comport only with the ſupreme God,—nay, to call each perſon by himſelf, diſtinctly, expreſsly to call each perſon God and Lord;—ſure, if, after all theſe declarations, there be not three perſons in the one, incomprehenſible Godhead; if each of theſe illuſtrious perſons be not very God;—what can we ſay, but that the ſcriptures are inconſiſtent and ſelf-contradictory pieces?—So that, upon the whole, we are reduced to this dilemma, either to admit this abſurd and impious charge upon the ſcriptures; or elſe to acknowledge the perſonality and divinity of the three perſons in the adorable Trinity.

But, perhaps, a curious genius, that has been accuſtomed to enter deep into the *rationale* of things; that thinks it beneath a ſagacious inquirer to credit, unleſs he can comprehend,—ſuch a genius may aſk, with a kind of amazement, How can theſe things be?—Here I pretend to give no ſatisfaction. Here I confeſs myſelf at a loſs. I cannot conceive how the principle of gravitation acts, or what conſtitutes the power of attraction. If I cannot penetrate the hidden qualities

lities of a thousand common objects, that daily present themselves to my senses; no wonder, that I should be unable to unravel the awful secrets of the divine nature; no wonder that I should be incapable of finding out to perfection that infinite Majesty, who dwells in light inaccessible. Since the τὸ εἶναι is attested by a multitude of witnesses from scripture, let us be content to wait for the τὸ πῶς, till this gross interposing cloud of flesh and mortality flee away; until that happy hour arrives, that desirable state commence, when we shall no longer see thro' a glass darkly, but shall know even as we are known.

I should now proceed, according to the ability which the great source of wisdom may please to bestow, to examine Mr *Tomkins*'s *Calm inquiry;* but this is what my time, claimed by a variety of other engagements, will not permit; and what, I presume, you yourself, tired already by a tedious epistle, will very readily excuse. Hereafter, if you insist upon my executing the plan laid down in the beginning of this paper, I will communicate my remarks (such as they are) relating to the forementioned treatise, with all that chearful compliance, and unreserved openness, which may most emphatically bespeak me, dear Sir,

Yours, *&c.*

LETTER XXV.

Weston-Favell, Feb. 9. 1745-6.

THanks to you, dear Sir, for your kind wishes. Blessed be the divine Providence, I am now able to inform you, that what you wish is accomplished. I have had one of the most agreeable losses I ever met with; I have lost my indisposition, and am, in a manner, well.

I send herewith the poem on Christianity. The other books, which you have been pleased to lend me, will

will follow by the first opportunity. I read Mr *Hobson*'s performance with eagerness and delight. What is wrote by a valuable friend, has a kind of secret unaccountable charm. It may not be preferable to other compositions, yet, methinks, it pleases more.

I congratulate you, Sir, and my country, on the good news received from the north. How do you like *Stackhouse*'s history of the Bible? I am sure he has one advantage, superior to all the historians of the world; That the facts he relates are more venerable for their antiquity, more admirable for their grandeur, and more important on account of their universal usefulness. I have often thought, that the scripture is finely calculated to furnish out the most exquisite entertainment to the imagination, from those three principal sources mentioned by Mr *Addison* the *Great*, the *Beautiful*, and the *New*. But what is this compared with that infinitely noble benefit, to impart which is their professed design; the benefit of making us wise to salvation, of making us partakers of a divine nature?—I am, *&c.*

LETTER XXVI.

Dear Sir, *Weston-Favell, Feb.* 11. 1745-6.

I Received your ticket some time ago, in which you desire me to consider some particular passages of scripture. After an afflictive indisposition, which confined me to my room several days, I have examined the texts you alledge. They relate, I find, to that grand question, which has lately been the subject of our debate, the Divinity of our Lord Jesus Christ.—I could have wished, that the controversy had been brought to a satisfactory and happy issue. Very unwilling to engage in it a second time, I must beg leave to sue for my *Bene decessit*, and resign the management of so important a dispute to incomparably more able hands.

hands.—However, in obedience to your requeſt, (*quid enim amicitiæ denegandum?*) I ſhall briefly lay before you my opinion concerning thoſe portions of inſpired wiſdom; and then proceed, in purſuance of my promiſe, to weigh, with calmneſs and impartiality, the moſt material of Mr *Tomkins's* objections.

You obſerve, That the Father is never repreſented yielding obedience to Chriſt, or praying to Chriſt.—I acknowledge the truth of the remark, and aſſign this clear and obvious reaſon, becauſe it was the peculiar office of the ſecond perſon of the Trinity to humble himſelf, to unite himſelf to fleſh and blood, and to be made in all things like unto us, ſin only excepted. Had not the bleſſed Jeſus been clothed with our nature, and partook of our innocent infirmities, we ſhould never have heard any ſuch thing, as his yielding obedience, or praying to another, greater than himſelf. This reſults not from his eſſential, but his aſſumed nature: nor is it at all repugnant to reaſon, to be inferior in one character, and at the ſame time abſolutely equal in another. His Majeſty King *George* may be inferior to the Emperor, in the capacity of Elector of *Hanover;* he may be ſubject to the Imperial authority, as he is a prince of the *Germanic* body; and yet equal to the moſt illuſtrious monarchs, obnoxious to no earthly juriſdiction, in his nobler quality of King of *Great Britain*, *France*, and *Ireland*. This ſeems to be a very eaſy and natural ſolution of the difficulty: whereas, I think, I may venture to defy the niceſt metaphyſician, or the moſt acute caſuiſt, to reconcile the notions of divinity and inferiority. As well may contradictions be made compatible. A God, who is inferior, is, to my apprehenſion, a perfect paradox. It is neceſſarily implied in the idea of God, That he be, as our old tranſlation of the *Pſalms* very emphatically and beautifully ſtyles him, The Moſt Higheſt. Therefore, our Saviour, who often aſſerts his claim to Divinity, declares, as an inſe-

parable

parable conſequent of this high prerogative, All things which the Father hath, are mine. Is the Father's exiſtence inconceivable and eternal? the ſame alſo is the Son's. Has the Father an unequalled abſolute ſupremacy? ſuch likewiſe hath the Son.

But I ſee you have ready at hand to object, *John* xiv. 28. My Father is greater than I.—Who are we to underſtand by the perſon I? Doubtleſs, that being who was capable of going and coming; who was ſometimes in one place, and ſometimes in another; now with the diſciples on earth, anon ſeparated from them by a tranſlation into heaven: and who can this be but the man Chriſt Jeſus; the human nature of our Redeemer? The attribute of limited locality, determines this point with the utmoſt clearneſs; why then ſhould any one apply that property to the Godhead of our bleſſed Maſter, which he himſelf ſo plainly appropriates to his manhood?

This text very opportunely furniſhes us with a key, to enter into the true meaning of your next quotation, 1 *Cor.* xi. 3. The head of Chriſt is God. Only let St *John* be allowed to expound St *Paul*. I aſk this ſingle conceſſion from my worthy friend, (and ſure it is no unreaſonable one.) Let us agree to pay a greater deference to the beloved diſciple's comment, than to Mr *Pierce*'s paraphraſe, or the interpretation of the *Arian* creed; then the ſenſe will be as follows, The Deity is the head of the Mediator. As the members are conducted by the head, and ſubſervient to the head; ſo Chriſt Jeſus, in his human capacity, acted and acts in ſubordination to the Godhead; obeying the ſignifications of his will, and referring all his adminiſtrations to his glory. This expoſition, I imagine, the context corroborates, and the ſcope of the apoſtle's arguing requires.

As for *Heb.* i. 8, 9. this text affirms, in the moſt expreſs terms, That Chriſt is God, ὁ θρονος σου ὁ ΘΕΟΣ. And what can be a ſtronger proof of his unrivalled ſupremacy

macy and ſovereignty?—But, perhaps, this may be one of thoſe places, in which, we are informed by our objectors, the word GOD ſignifies no more than a king or ruler, conſequently, does not prove our Redeemer to be God in reality, and by nature; but only to be complimented with this appellation, in reſpect of his office and authority.—I believe, Sir, you will find, upon a more attentive inquiry, that this ſubtile diſtinction is contrary to the perpetual uſe of the ſcriptures. A very celebrated critic obſerves, that wherever the name ELOHIM (tranſlated by the apoſtle ΘΕΟΣ) is taken in an abſolute ſenſe, and reſtrained to one particular perſon, (as it is in the paſſage before us,) it conſtantly denotes the true and only God. Magiſtrates are indeed ſaid to be Elohim, in relation to their office, but no one magiſtrate was ever ſo called; nor can it be ſaid, without blaſphemy, to any one of them, Thou art Elohim, or God. It is alſo recorded of *Moſes*, Thou ſhalt be Elohim; yet not abſolutely, but relatively only, a God to *Pharaoh*, and to *Aaron*, i. e. in God's ſtead, doing in the name of God what he commanded, and declaring what he revealed.—Beſides, does not the apoſtle, in this very chapter, ver. 10. addreſs the following acknowledgment to Chriſt, Thou, Lord, in the beginning, haſt laid the foundation of the earth, and the heavens are the work of thy hands. And is not the work of creation the unſhared prerogative and honour of the ſupreme God? This I am pretty ſure of, it is the prerogative of that God to whom the worſhip of the ſaints, under the Old Teſtament, is directed; of that God, who has declared himſelf jealous of his honour, and reſolves not to give his glory to another? *Melchiſedec* made this illuſtrious being the object of his adoration, Bleſſed be the moſt high God, poſſeſſor of heaven and earth: The day is thine, and the night is thine: thou haſt prepared the light and the ſun; was judged by the *Pſalmiſt* one of the nobleſt aſcriptions of

praiſe which could be made to the Deity. *Jonah* has left us a confeſſion of his faith, and an abſtract of his devotion, in the following words; I fear the Lord, the God of heaven, who hath made the ſea, and the dry land. Yet St *Paul* aſſures us, that this great Creator and Proprietor of heaven and earth; this object of divine worſhip in all ages of the ancient church, is he—ο δι' εαυτου καθαρισμον ποιησαμενος των αμαρτιων ημων, verſe 3.—Now, can we view the magnificent ſyſtem of the univerſe, the immenſity of its extent, the vaſt variety of its parts, the inimitable accuracy of its ſtructure, the perfect harmony of its motions, together with the aſtoniſhing energy and effects of its mechanic powers;—can we contemplate this world of wonders, and withhold ourſelves a ſingle moment from aſcribing the glory of incomparable wiſdom, and matchleſs perfections to its Maker? Can we glance an eye, or ſtart a thought, thro' that ample field of miracles, which nature in all her ſcenes regularly exhibits, and ſtill conclude, that the Author of all takes too much upon him, when he advances the following claim?

——————*None I know*
Second to me, or like, equal much leſs. MILT.

Poſſibly, our ſceptical gentlemen are ready to reply, We are far from denying that Chriſt made the world; but we ſuppoſe, that he made it only as a miniſterial being; not by any ſufficiency of his own, but by a power delegated to him from the infinite Godhead.—But ſure the abettors of this opinion never conſidered that emphatical paſſage, παντα δι' αυτου, και εις αυτον εκτισται ‡. By whatever artful evaſion they may think to elude the force of the former expreſſion, I cannot ſee what poſſible eſcape they can contrive from the latter. It is plain from the philoſophical principles of an apoſtle, that the univerſe was formed by Chriſt as the almighty Artificer, for Chriſt as its final end: and is not this a demonſtration, that Chriſt was not a mere inſtrument, but

‡ Col. i. 16.

but the grand, glorious, self-sufficient agent; the Alpha and Omega of all things?

After all that has been said upon this text, will it be intimated, that I have been partial in my examination of it? that the sentence, which most particularly favours your opinion, and looks with the most frowning aspect on mine, is passed over without notice? namely, where it is taught, That God anointed Christ with the the oil of gladness above his fellows *.—I reply, by owning, that these words most undeniably imply inferiority; they imply a state of indigence, which wants something it has not naturally; a state of impotence, which receives from another, what it cannot convey to itself. Surely, then, this clause must according to all the laws of just interpretation, be referred to that nature which admitted of such wants, and was subject to such infirmities. To ascribe it to that nature, which is characterized as God, would be almost as affronting to reason, as it is to the Deity.—It is farther observable, that the very expression limits the sense to that capacity of our Redeemer, in which others stood related to him as his fellows. And can this be any other than the human?—Let me add one word more, before I dismiss this inquiry; suppose I was to shift sides in the dispute, and turn the tables upon the disciples of *Arius*. Gentlemen, since you take so much pains to prove the inferiority of our Lord Jesus Christ, permit me to try, if I cannot outshoot you in your own bow. I will undertake to shew, on your own principles, that he was inferior to millions of created beings; for this I have the positive and sure evidence of scripture, We see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels †.—These gentlemen, I verily think, would have so much regard for the honour of a person on whom their everlasting all depends, as to answer with some becoming spirit, You are to distinguish between what our Saviour was

* Heb. i. 9. † Heb. ii. 9.

made occasionally, and what he was originally: Tho' his human nature was taken from a class of beings lower in dignity than the angels, yet his nobler and more exalted nature was greatly superior to them all. —Now, Sir, as we must have recourse sometimes to this distinction, our adversaries themselves being our judges and our precedent, why should we not carry it along with us continually? Without it, a multitude of texts appear perplexed in their meaning, and clash with other scriptures; with it they drop their obscurity, are disentangled from their intricacy, and harmonize entirely with the whole tenor of sacred writ.

1 *Cor.* xv. 28. is another scripture pointed out for consideration. This, I confess, is a difficult, and admitting it was (to me at least) an unintelligible passage, nay, directly repugnant to my hypothesis,—what would be a rational procedure in this case? to renounce my faith, because I cannot reconcile it with one scripture, though it stands supported by a copious multiplicity of others? If, in debating on any question, there be five hundred ayes, and but one no, I appeal to the conduct of the Honourable house of Commons, whether it be reasonable, that the point should be carried by the single negative, in opposition to so vast a majority of affirmatives? However, the state of our doctrine is not so bad, nor this text so diametrically opposite to it, as to destroy all hopes of establishing it with a *nemine contradicente*.—The apostle affirms, that at the consummation of terrestrial things, when the state of human probation ends, and the number of the elect is completed, then shall the Son also himself be subject unto him that put all things under him; that God may be in all; *i. e.* according to my judgment, the Son, at the commencement of that grand revolution, will entirely resign the administration of his mediatorial kingdom; he will no longer act as an advocate or intercessor, because the reasons on which this office is founded will cease for ever; he will no longer, as a high

high prieſt, plead his atoning blood in behalf of ſinners, nor, as a king, diſpenſe the ſuccours of his ſanctifying grace, becauſe all guilt will be done away, and the actings of corruption be at an end: he will no longer be the medium of his people's acceſs to the knowledge and enjoyment of the Father, becauſe then they will ſtand perpetually in the beatific preſence, and ſee face to face, know even as they are known.—I may probably miſtake the meaning of the words; but whatever ſhall appear to be their preciſe ſignification, this, I think, is ſo clear as not to admit of any doubt, that it relates to an incarnate perſon; relates to him, who died for our ſins, was buried, and roſe again *. And can the ſurrender of all authority made by the man Jeſus Chriſt, be any bar to his unlimited equality as God?

You refer me to *Pſal.* viii. 5. & lxxxii. 1, 6. *Exod.* xxii. 28. and add, theſe texts prove that God ſignifies in ſome places king or ruler.—I acknowledge, that the word Elohim, in the aforecited paſſages, ſignifies no more than angels, kings, or rulers. But is this a demonſtration, that the word Jehovah, the incommunicable name, ſignifies no more than an angel, a king, or a ruler? This is the concluſion our adverſaries are to infer: this the point they are to make good, otherwiſe, their attempts drop ſhort of the mark, fly wide from their purpoſe. Becauſe it is plain from inconteſtable authorities, that Jeſus is Jehovah. This was hinted in a former letter; and if you pleaſe to compare *Iſ.* vi. 3. with *John* xii. 41. you will find another convincing evidence, that the Jehovah of the *Jews* is the Jeſus of the *Chriſtians*.—Beſides, in all thoſe places, where the term God is uſed to denote ſome created being, inveſted with conſiderable authority, or poſſeſſed of conſiderable dignity, the connection is ſuch, as abſolutely to exclude the perſon, ſo denominated, from any title to a divine nature; whereas, when the name God is applied to the ſecond

* 1 Cor. xv. 3, 4.

cond perſon of the Trinity, it is connected with ſuch conſequents or antecedents, as neceſſarily include the idea of divinity and ſupremacy. For inſtance, when the apoſtle recognizes the Deity of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, in thoſe remarkable words, *Rom.* ix. 5. Who is God; leſt this idle piece of ſophiſtry ſhould have any room for admittance, he adds a moſt determining clauſe, over all, bleſſed for ever.—I have called it idle ſophiſtry, for really it is nothing elſe. Only obſerve the proceſs of the pretended argument, and you yourſelf will allow it no better appellation. What is deſigned for the argument runs thus: Becauſe rulers of diſtinction have ſometimes the title of Elohim, therefore Jeſus, who has the title of Jehovah, is not very God, but only a ruler of diſtinction; or, the word God, when neceſſarily determined by the context to ſome ſubordinate being, ſignifies a ſubordinate being; therefore, the word God, when neceſſarily determined by the context to ſignify the ſupreme God, does not ſignify the ſupreme God, but only ſome ſubordinate being.—Theſe are the mighty reaſonings; ſuch the formidable artillery, with which the adherents of *Arius* attack the divinity and equality of our Saviour. May the arms of our foreign enemies, and inteſtine rebels, be made, in their kind, of ſuch metal, conſiſt of ſuch ſtrength! and I may venture to addreſs my countrymen in *David*'s encouraging language, Let no man's heart fail, becauſe of them.

I hope it will not be objected, that I have ſometimes miſtook the particular point to be diſcuſſed, and confounded the divinity of our Lord with his equality to the Father.—I own, I have not been ſcrupulouſly careful to preſerve any ſuch diſtinction, becauſe I am perſuaded it is perfectly chimerical. Whoever admits the former, grants the latter. The one cannot ſubſiſt without the other; or rather, they are one and the ſame thing. To be equal with the Father is to be divine; and to be divine, is to be equal with the Father.—An inferior deity, was a notion that paſſed current in the Heathen

Heathen world; but we have not so learned the divine nature, as to adopt it into our creed. It is a proposition that confutes itself. The predicate and subject are self-contradictory. God certainly means a being of incomparable, unparalleled glory and perfection. No one will dare to give a lower definition of the Godhead. Yet this the first term of the sentence affirms, the second denies.—Whenever I hear the awful word God, I form an idea of a being possessed of absolute supremacy. Inferiority is altogether as inconsistent with my apprehension of the Godhead, as a limited extension is with immensity. The schoolmens maxim is strictly true when applied to the divine nature, that his properties and excellencies *non recipiunt magis aut minus*.—Besides, Sir, is there not another apparent inconveniency, another inextricable difficulty, attending this superfine distinction? Does it not suppose, instead of distinct persons, distinct beings, distinct essences? That which is inferior cannot be the very same with its superior. Identity in this case, consists not with inequality. The consequence of this tenet is polytheism.

For my part, I lay it down as an incontestable principle, such as reason and scripture concur to establish, that whatever, whosoever is God, must be absolutely supreme.—I then proceed to examine whether the divine names, attributes, honours; those which are incommunicably divine, which flow from the divine essence, which cannot comport with a finite existence, but are the sole prerogative of the unequalled God,—whether these are in scripture clearly ascribed to the sacred person of the Son;—if they are, my reason requires me to believe that he is very God, and co-equal with the Father. My reason, in her sedatest moments, assures me, that scripture cannot deceive, though I may be unable to conceive. My reason declares, that I shall be a rebel against her laws, if I do not submit to this determination of scripture, as decisive, as infallible.—I am, *&c.*

LET-

LETTER XXVII.

Dear Sir, *Weſton-Favell, March,* 1745-6.

IN a former letter, I conſidered, whether the bleſſed Spirit is really a diſtinct perſon,—whether this perſon is truly and properly God.—It appeared from a variety of ſcriptures, that both theſe queſtions were to be reſolved in the affirmative.—Theſe preliminaries being ſettled, I would hope, with ſome perſpicuity of reaſon, and ſtrength of argument; I now proceed, in conſequence of my engagement, to examine Mr *Tomkins*'s objections againſt the received cuſtom of addreſſing divine worſhip to this divine Being.

The author, I freely acknowledge, writes with a great appearance of integrity; with a calm and decent ſpirit of controverſy; and with a very plauſible air of truth. As the ſubject of his inquiry is of the higheſt dignity and importance, as his method of managing the debate is, to ſay the leaſt, by no means contemptible, I cannot forbear expreſſing ſome ſurpriſe, that none of the ingenious diſſenters, to whom the piece is particularly inſcribed, have thought proper to intereſt themſelves in the diſpute, and either confute what is urged, or elſe (like perſons of that inviolable attachment to the pure ſcriptural worſhip, which they profeſs) recede from the uſe of their allowed doxologies.

For my part, as I firmly believe it a proper practice to worſhip the Son, as we worſhip the Father, and to worſhip the Holy Ghoſt, as we worſhip the other perſons of the undivided Trinity, I am ſo far from diſapproving, that I admire our cuſtomary doxology, and think it a very noble and inſtructive part of our ſacred ſervice. Noble, becauſe it exhibits one of the grand myſteries, and glorious peculiaries of the goſpel; inſtructive, becauſe it ſo frequently reminds the worſhipper of a point which it ſo greatly concerns him to believe, and which is fitted to inſpire the brighteſt, the ſtrongeſt hopes, of final, of complete ſalvation.

But

But leſt this perſuaſion ſhould be deemed the crude production of early prejudice, rather than the mature fruit of ſedate conſideration, we will very readily hear whatever can be alledged againſt it; and not willingly ſecrete one objection, or miſrepreſent one argument, occurring in the Inquiry.

"Let it be ſuppoſed," ſays our author, "that the Holy Spirit is one of the perſons of the Godhead; I ſtill query, what warrant Chriſtians have for a direct and diſtinct worſhip of this third perſon in the Godhead." (p. 1.)—I ſhould think, there can be no reaſonable doubt, whether worſhip is to be paid to the Divinity. Thou ſhalt worſhip the Lord thy God, is a law of inconteſtable authority, and eternal obligation.—As for the circumſtances of worſhip included in its being direct, this cannot alter the caſe, nor render the practice improper. According to my apprehenſion, all true and genuine worſhip is direct. If it be addreſſed to the divine object at ſecond hand, it has more of the nature of idolatry, than worſhip. Such is the religious foppery of the Papiſts, who will not apply directly to the Father of everlaſting compaſſions, but adore God as it were by proxy.—With regard to the diſtinctneſs of the worſhip, this depends entirely upon the ſcripture's diſtinguiſhing their perſons. If this be clearly done, the diſtinctneſs of worſhip is properly authoriſed, and the fitneſs of it follows of courſe. If the inſpired writers aſſure us, that the Father is God, this is a ſufficient warrant to pay divine honours to the Father. If the inſpired writers affirm, that the Son is God, this is a ſufficient ground for aſcribing divine honours to the Son. If the ſame inſpired writers declare, that the Holy Ghoſt is God, we need no clearer warrant, nor can we have a louder call, to pay him our devoteſt homage.—In a word, it is the voice of reaſon, it is the command of ſcripture, it is founded on the unalterable relations of things, that worſhip, direct worſhip, diſtinct worſhip, all worſhip, be rendered to the Deity.—So that the Divinity of the Holy

Ghoſt, excluſive of any apoſtolical precept or example, is an incomparably better reaſon for aſcribing divine honours to this ſacred perſon, than the bare want of ſuch precept or example, can be a reaſon to juſtify the omiſſion, or condemn the performance of it.

I am no advocate for implicit faith in any human determination or opinion. Should I ſee whole ſects, or whole churches, in a glaring error, ſuch as I can prove from ſcripture to be palpably wrong, and of pernicious tendency, I would make no ſcruple to remonſtrate, diſſent, and enter my proteſt. But in a caſe, which Mr *Tomkins* himſelf (p. 2. l. 19.) allows to be of a dubious nature; where I have no poſitive proof from God's holy word that the practice is unlawful, or improper; I cannot but apprehend, that it becomes a modeſt perſon, diffident of his own judgment, to acquieſce in the general, the long-continued uſage of all the churches.—This is urged by an inſpired writer as a forcible motive for rejecting a practice; and why ſhould not I admit it as a motive of weight for adhering to a practice? We have no ſuch cuſtom, neither the churches of God *, was an apoſtolical argument. And, in an inſtance, where we are not precluded by any prohibition of ſcripture, I think, the reaſoning is equally concluſive, if changed to the affirmative, We have ſuch a cuſtom, and the churches of God.—Was I to ſettle my opinion, and adjuſt my conduct, with regard to ſuch a point, I ſhould be inclined to argue in the following manner: I cannot bring one text from the ſacred writings, which forbids the uſage; and as it is unanimouſly practiſed by devout perſons of almoſt every denomination; as it has been the received, the uninterrupted practice of the Chriſtian church for more than a thouſand years; who am I, that I ſhould diſturb the peace, or ſeparate myſelf from the communion of the church, for a procedure, which ſuch multitudes of excellent perſons maintain to be conſonant, and which I cannot prove to be contrary, to

* 1 Cor. xi. 16.

to the ſenſe of ſcripture? Who am I, that I ſhould fancy myſelf to have more of the mind of God, than the whole united church of true believers, eminent ſaints, and illuſtrious martyrs?

"But there is no precept for this worſhip in ſcripture," (page 1.); and Dr *Owen* affirms, "That a divine command is the ground," (he means, I preſume, the only ground, or elſe the quotation is nothing to our author's purpoſe) "of all worſhip." (page 25.)—Dr *Owen*'s character, I own, is conſiderable, as well as his aſſertion peremptory; but yet I cannot prevail on myſelf to ſubmit to his *ipſe dixit* as an oracle, nor reverence his judgment as infallible.—I would aſk the Doctor, What divine command the Heathens ever received to worſhip the bleſſed God? I know of no verbal or written precept. But they ſaw their warrant included in their wants, they perceived their obligation reſulting from the divine attributes.—Will Dr *Owen* maintain, That no worſhip was expected from the Pagans? that they had been blameleſs, and acted according to the principles of their duty, if they had with-held all acts of veneration from the Deity? No, ſurely. St *Paul*, in declaring them faulty, for not worſhipping the Almighty in ſuch a rational manner, as was ſuitable to his pure and exalted nature, clearly intimates, that it was their duty both to worſhip, and to worſhip aright. It is not ſaid by the apoſtle, though it is the conſequence of the Doctor's poſition, that they ought to have refrained from all worſhip, and not have meddled with matters of devotion, till they received an authentic warrant from revelation. The inſpired caſuiſt grounds his duty, in this particular, upon the eternal power and Godhead (*Rom.* i. 20.) of the ſupreme Being, which were diſcoverable by the exerciſe of their underſtandings, and from a ſurvey of the creation.—In conformity to the apoſtle's ſentiments, I ſhould rather place the foundation of religious worſhip in the glories, the

mercies, the unſearchable riches of the almighty Majeſty. Theſe, together with the relation which dependent creatures bear to this all-producing, all-ſuſtaining, infinitely-beneficent God, are the grand warrant to authoriſe addreſſes of adoration. Theſe are reaſons prior to all expreſs revelations, and would have ſubſiſted, if actual commands had never been given. If this be not true, what will become of all natural religion?—Scripture, indeed, has declared explicitly the binding nature of theſe motives; ſcripture, like a ſacred herald, has promulged what God fore-ordained, what reaſon had decreed, what neceſſarily flowed from the habitudes of perſons and things. Or, to repreſent the point in another light, the perfections of the Godhead are the original, the inviolable obligation to all expreſſions of homage and devotion; to ratify this obligation, and impart to it all poſſible ſolemnity and ſanction, ſcripture has added the broad ſeal of heaven.—If this be right reaſon, and if the Holy Ghoſt be really God, his all-ſufficient excellencies, and my ſtate of dependence, are a proper licence, or rather a virtual mandamus, for the applications of prayer, and the aſcriptions of praiſe. Grant this one propoſition, relating to the Divinity of the bleſſed Spirit, and admit that his eternal power and Godhead are a ſufficient ground for religious worſhip, and we ſhall find ourſelves unavoidably determined. We muſt rebel againſt our reaſon, muſt violate the dictates of our conſcience, muſt act in oppoſition, not to one particular text, but to the main tenor and ſcope of the whole ſcripture, if we do not render all the ſervice, yield all the reverence, due to a glorious Being, in whom we live, move, and exiſt.

But ſtill we are told, in various places, again and again we are told, "That there is no expreſs warrant."—Prodigious ſtreſs is laid upon this word *expreſs*, the whole force of the objection ſeems to terminate on this point. There is no expreſs warrant, therefore

therefore it is an unwarrantable practice.—For my part, I have not discernment enough to perceive the conclusiveness of this arguing. I must beg leave to deny the consequence of such a syllogism. For if the sense of various scriptures has made it a duty, this is warrant enough, tho' it be not particularly enjoined, or tolerated in form. This maxim our ingenious author will admit in other cases, and why not in the present? There is no express command to add any prayer at the celebration of baptism. When our Lord instituted the ordinance, he only delivers the form of initiation into the Christian church, without any prescription relating to concomitant prayer. When *Philip* administered this sacrament to the eunuch, there is no mention of any address to the Almighty, pertinent to the occasion. I cannot recollect, that any of the holy writers either inform the world, that they practised such a method themselves, or so much as intimate, that they would advise others in succeeding ages, to accompany this solemnity with suitable devotions.—But though we have no positive injunction, we have the reasonableness of the thing, for our plea. Other scriptures, that virtually, tho' not explicitly, recommend it, are our warrant. In every thing, says St *Paul*, let your requests be made known unto God; consequently, in this sacred and important thing.

I must again declare, that I can by no means assent to our author's grand *postulatum*, That nothing in the way of divine worship is allowable, but what has an express warrant from scripture. Because virtual warrants are warrants; consequential warrants are warrants. Our objector must maintain this in some instances, and why should he disclaim it in others? To be consistent in conduct, is surely essential to the character of an impartial inquirer after truth. Shall such an one sometimes reject an argument as weak and insignificant, because it happens to be illative only, and not direct; and at other times urge it as cogent and irrefragable?

fragable? I will mention one very memorable particular of this nature; that is the case of the Lord's day. Why does Mr *Tomkins* transfer the sanctification of a particular day from the seventh to the first? Has he any express command in scripture, any express warrant from scripture, for this alteration? If he has, let him produce it. I must own, I have none but consequential warrants; warrants formed upon conclusions, and derived from some remarkable scriptures. But these not near so numerous, nor near so ponderous, as those which concur to establish the Divinity of the Holy Ghost. Now, if an express warrant be not needful in the one, why should it be so rigorously insisted on in the other duty?—If then this leading principle of our author's be false or precarious, what truth, what certainty can there be in any, in all his deductions from it? If the ground-work be unsubstantial, and the foundation fail, what solidity can there be in the superstructure? how can the building stand?

Possibly Mr *Tomkins* may reply, "The example of the primitive church determines this point." We find, it was the custom of the earliest antiquity, to observe the Christian Sabbath on the first day of the week; and therefore have very good reason to believe, that the usage was established by apostolical authority.—And may not I say the same, with regard to the custom of ascribing glory, and rendering adoration, to the third person of the Trinity? *Justin Martyr*, the most ancient and authentic apologist for Christianity, who is next in succession, and next in credit to the *patres apostolici*, he declares expressly, That it was the received custom of the Christian church, in his days, to worship the Holy Ghost. His words are, Πνευμα προφητικον, οτι μετα λογου τιμωμεν, αποδειξομεν. You perceive, he not only avows the thing, but vindicates its reasonableness and propriety.—Perhaps, some captious critic may insinuate, That it is matter of doubt, whether the word—τιμωμεν—implies divine honours.—I wave all attempts to prove

prove this point from the original of the New Teſtament, becauſe, to obviate ſuch an objection, we have another paſſage to produce from the ſame ſaint, father, and martyr.—Πνευμα προφητικον σεβομεθα και προσκυνουμεν, *Apol.* 1. Can any expreſſions be imagined more forcible in their ſignification, or more appoſite to our purpoſe? They import the higheſt acts of adoration, and yet they deſcribe the regards which were paid by the pureſt antiquity to the Holy Ghoſt.—Will it ſtill be ſuggeſted, That *Juſtin* makes no mention of offering up prayers, or addreſſing praiſes? I anſwer, This he muſt certainly mean, becauſe no one can be ſaid—σιβισθαι και προσκυνειν τον Θεον η το Πνευμα—who with-holds praiſe, or reſtrains prayer. Theſe particular inſtances are as neceſſarily implied in thoſe general terms, as the ſpecies is included in the genus.

You will pleaſe to obſerve, that this amounts to a great deal more than Mr *Tomkins*, (page 17.), not very ingenuouſly, ſuggeſts, *viz.* "a few hints that learned men have found, in the primitive ages, of the aſcription of praiſe to the Holy Ghoſt." It ſeems alſo entirely to overthrow what, in another place, he advances (page 26.) not very conſiſtently with truth, *viz.* "That there is ſo little appearance of the obſervance of ſuch a cuſtom, for ſo many ages of the Chriſtian church."—Few hints and little appearance! Can a clear and determinate declaration, made by a writer of the moſt unqueſtionable veracity, concerning the unanimous, the univerſal practice of the ancient church,—can this evidence, with any fairneſs or equity, be rated at the diminutive degree of hints and little appearance?

As to what is remarked relating to the corruption of the early writers, the interpolations, or alterations made by careleſs tranſcribers, (page 17.), this ſeems to be a moſt empty and jejune inſinuation. It is what will ſerve any ſide of any debate. It is oppoſing hypotheſis to fact; precarious and unſupported hypotheſis, to clear and undeniable fact. This ſure is catching,

ing, not at a twig, but at a ſhadow.—I never could like Dr *Bentley*'s *oſcitantia et hallucinatia librariorum*, even in his animadverſions on Heathen authors: becauſe it was an outcry fitted for any occaſion, a charge ever ready at hand, and equally ſuited to diſcountenance truth, or detect error. Much leſs can I think it ſufficient to overthrow the teſtimony, or invalidate the authenticity of our ancient Chriſtian writers.—Would a bare innuendo (and Mr *Tomkins*'s is no more,) and that from an intereſted perſon, without any the leaſt ſhew of proof; would this be admitted, in a court of judicature, to ſuperſede the plain, the ſolemn depoſition of a credible witneſs? Superſede it? Quite the reverſe. It would convince the Judge, and teach the jury, that the cauſe muſt be extremely wrong, utterly unſupportable, ſince artifices ſo weak and tranſparently fallacious were uſed in its defence.

But it is frequently objected, That no mention is made, no warrant is to be found for diſtinct worſhip. The aforecited writer, and the whole ſcripture is ſilent upon the article of diſtinct worſhip. And the reader is led to ſuppoſe, that there is ſome mighty difference between diſtinct, and I know not what other kind of worſhip.—Why does our author harp ſo inceſſantly upon this ſtring? whence ſuch irreconcileable averſion to this quality of worſhip? One would almoſt ſuſpect, he was conſcious, that ſome worſhip ſhould be paid, but could not digeſt the doctrine, nor ſubmit to the payment of diſtinct worſhip.—I muſt reply once for all, that if any worſhip be due, diſtinct worſhip cannot be improper; much more if all worſhip (which, I apprehend, is included in *Juſtin*'s words, and follows from the Divinity of the bleſſed Spirit) be requiſite, diſtinct worſhip cannot be unwarrantable.

Another grand argument, urged by our inquirer, is, "That the apoſtles, as far as appears, never practiſed this worſhip of the Holy Ghoſt themſelves, nor recommended it to others," (page 2.)—He ſhould, by all

all means, have printed *as far as appears* in Italics, or capitals; because then the reader would have apprehended more easily the uncertain foundation on which the reasoning is built.—But tho' this particular, relating to the practice of the apostles, does not appear, one way or the other; yet our author in his 4th page, and elsewhere, concludes from it as assuredly as if it stood upon authentic record. "For," says he, "if "we admit, that the reason of things is sufficient to "establish this practice, it will prove too much." It will, undoubtedly, if it proves any thing, prove it a duty to pay such worship to the Holy Spirit; and, consequently, that the apostles were defective, either in not seeing this reason of things as well as we, or not practising according to it. Does he not here suppose, the apostolical omission an acknowledged, undoubted point? which, a few lines before, he had confessed to be dubious and unapparent.

However, not to insist upon this little self-contradicting slip, I would ask, What reason has Mr *Tomkins* to conclude, that the apostles omitted this usage, which the Christian churches have adopted? Do they ever declare, or so much as hint, that they are determined to omit it? Do they ever caution their converts against it, as a dangerous error? Is there any such memorial preserved, or any such caveat lodged in their sacred writings?—Now, to argue in our author's strain: If it was so unjustifiable a thing to address praise, or put up prayer to the Holy Ghost, there could not be a more necessary precaution, than that the apostles, those careful instructors, should have warned their people of the mistake; especially since it was so extremely probable, so almost unavoidable, that they would fall into it. For I appeal to the whole world, whether a considerate person would not naturally judge it reasonable, whether a devout person would not feel a forcible inclination, to worship that venerable name, into which

he was baptized; and to praiſe that beneficent Being, who is the author of ſo many inestimable bleſſings. Yet though this is ſo apparently natural, ſuch as the apoſtles could not but foreſee was likely to happen, they ſay not a ſyllable, by way of prevention; they take no care to guard their converts againſt ſuch a practice. A pregnant ſign, that it is allowed by divine Wiſdom, and chargeable neither with ſuperſtition nor idolatry.

But our author, to corroborate his argument, adds, "To ſuppoſe the apoſtles directed any explicit wor-"ſhip to the Holy Ghoſt, though we have no men-"tion of it in ſcripture, where yet we meet with fre-"quent doxologies of theirs, and addreſſes by way of "prayer or petition," would be an unreaſonable preſumption.—I cannot accede to this aſſertion. The doxologies and prayers of the apoſtles, recorded in ſcripture, are only occaſional and incidental; inſerted as the fervour of a devout ſpirit ſuggeſted, in the body of their doctrinal and exhortatory writings. Now, the omiſſion of ſuch a practice in writings, which were compoſed with a view of inſtructing mankind in the great fundamentals of Chriſtianity, which were never intended as a full and complete ſyſtem of devotions;—the omiſſion of this practice in ſuch writings, can be no fair or concluſive argument for its being omitted in their ſtated acts of public worſhip. If, indeed, the apoſtles had, in their epiſtolary correſpondence, drawn up a form of devotions; had declared that in them was comprized a perfect pattern of devotional addreſſes, proper to be offered to the Deity; that all acts of worſhip, which deviated a jot or tittle from that preſcribed form, were unwarrantable; —if ſuch a compoſition had been tranſmitted from the apoſtles, and we had found no ſuch addreſſes therein, as thoſe for which we are pleading, I ſhould then allow a good deal of force in the argument drawn from the apoſtolical omiſſion; though, at the ſame time,

time, I could not be able to forbear wondering at the inconsistency of their doctrines, which teach us that the Holy Ghost is God, and of their worship, which refuses him divine honours.—But, I think, as the case stands, no solid argument, nothing but a specious cavil, can be formed from this circumstance of its being unpractised in the writings of the apostles.

"It does not appear that the apostles addressed distinct worship to the blessed Spirit; therefore we conclude, that they actually addressed none." As though fact and appearance were convertible terms. —I am surprized, that an author of Mr *Tomkins*'s penetration can prevail upon himself to be satisfied, or should offer to impose upon his readers, with a deduction so very illogical. Is the not appearing of a thing, a certain argument, or indeed any argument at all, for its not existing? It does not appear, that there are mountains, or groves, or rivers beneath our horizon: It does not appear, that there are any such vessels as lymphatics, any such fluid as the chyle, in these living bodies of ours. But by comparing them with others that have been dissected; and by reasoning from indisputable principles, relating to the animal œconomy, we assure ourselves of the reality of both these particulars.—Consider, Sir, into what unnumbered absurdities, and evident falsehoods, this way of arguing would betray us, if pursued in all its consequences. It will prove, if we once admit it as a test of truth, that nothing was transacted by scriptural men, but what is particularly recorded in scripture-history. I no where read *Isaac* circumcised his son *Jacob*, or instructed his household after the example of his father *Abraham*. But shall we infer, from the silence of scripture, with regard to these matters, that he never conformed to the former institution, nor performed the latter service? I should much rather believe, that, as he bears the character of a godly man, he walked in both these statutes and ordinan-

ces of the Lord blameleſs. And, ſince the apoſtles uniformly agree in this grand premiſe, That the Holy Ghoſt is God, it ſeems much more reaſonable to conclude from hence, that they paid him direct worſhip, than from their bare ſilence to infer, that they neglected this practice.—I no where read in the ſacred writings, that St *Peter* ſuffered martyrdom, or ſealed the teſtimony of Chriſt with his blood. But muſt we, on this account, perſuade ourſelves, that he was not one of the noble army of martyrs? No, you will ſay; it is very ſuppoſable, that he laid down his life for his Saviour, even though this event is not expreſsly recorded, becauſe our Lord clearly predicts it, when he informs him, by what death he ſhould glorify God. And may not I reply, with parity of reaſon, it is very ſuppoſable, that the apoſtles, in their ſolemn devotions, addreſſed direct diſtinct worſhip to the Holy Ghoſt, becauſe their declaring their belief in his perſonality and divinity, was a ſtrong intimation that they ſhould, was a ſort of prediction that they would, render all kind of homage and adoration to him.—Upon the whole, if this be a mere preſumption, no better than a *gratis dictum*, That the apoſtles did not worſhip the Holy Ghoſt, then all the ſpecious arguments, derived from hence, drop of courſe.

Our objector ſtill inſiſts, "That this is not a neceſ-"ſary part of Chriſtian worſhip," (page 2.)—Be pleaſed to obſerve, how he departs from his firſt propoſal. His firſt inquiry, that which the title-page exhibits, was, Whether this be warrantable? then, with an evaſive dexterity, he ſlips into another topic, and maintains, that it cannot be neceſſary. Whether this be tergiverſation or inaccuracy, I ſhall not ſtay to examine; but muſt aſk Mr *Tomkins*, What reaſon he has for this poſitive determination, that it cannot be neceſſary?—Becauſe, on the contrary ſuppoſition, "we ſhall condemn the apoſtles, as guilty of a great omiſſion," (page 2.).—This argument the author uſes more

more than once, therefore I may be excuſed in replying to it once again: We can have no pretence to condemn the apoſtles, till we have undeniable proof that there was ſuch an omiſſion in their conduct. Who can aſſert, who dares maintain, that, when the apoſtles were met together in the holy congregation, for large, ſolemn, copious devotion, they never recognized the Divinity of the three ſacred perſons, never addreſſed diſtinct acts of praiſe or invocation to each reſpectively? This, Mr *Tomkins* may perſiſt in ſuppoſing; but after all he can ſuggeſt in vindication of this principle, it will amount to no more than a bare ſuppoſal. I may, at leaſt, as fairly ſuppoſe the very reverſe; and, I think, have the ſuffrage of reaſon, the analogy of ſcripture, the conſent of the pureſt antiquity on my ſide.—However, in caſe Mr *Tomkins* had demonſtrated, by inconteſtable evidence, that the practice under conſideration cannot be neceſſary; does he confine himſelf, in every inſtance, to what is ſtrictly neceſſary? does he not allow himſelf in what is expedient? Could I not mention various particulars, which are not abſolutely neceſſary, but yet they are decent and uſeful; they contribute to the beauty and harmony of worſhip, to the comfort and edification of the worſhippers? Perhaps, it may not be neceſſary to particularize in our devotions the preſent diſtreſs of our nation, and to form particular petitions ſuitable to our national exigencies, or particular thankſgivings accommodated to our national deliverances. But ſince this is very expedient; ſince it tends to beget in all a more lively ſenſe of our dependence on divine Providence; ſince it is a moſt emphatical method of aſcribing to the ſupreme Diſpoſer the glory of all our public mercies; this practice is very becoming, very proper, very uſeful. Should I plead, in oppoſition to this cuſtom, that it is not abſolutely neceſſary: Your prayers may be acceptable to God, and beneficial to your country, without ſuch particularizing: St

Paul

Paul gives no expreſs command, ſets no explicit example of any ſuch uſage; there is no precedent from any of the apoſtles, where the affairs of the ſtate, under which hey lived, are particularly diſplayed before God inhumble ſupplication.—Would Mr *Tomkins* think this a ſufficient reaſon for him in his private, or for miniſters in their public devotions, to diſcontinue the practice? No, verily: the propriety, the expediency of the thing, would juſtify and aſcertain its uſe, even though no ſcriptural pattern had recommended, no ſcriptural precept enjoined it.

It is affirmed, (p. 5.) That "the addreſſes of the New Teſtament are always made to the Father, or to the Son:" and it is added, (page 10.) "that there is neither rule nor example in it for worſhipping any other perſon whatever."—This point our author affirms with a very poſitive air, as though it were incapable of being controverted; and therefore often builds aſſertions on it, often makes deductions from it. Suppoſe it was an undeniable truth, I think, we have ſhewn, that it can be no ſatisfactory proof, that, in all the enlarged devotions of the apoſtles, no addreſſes were offered to the bleſſed Spirit, becauſe a few ſhort ejaculations made no explicit mention of him.—But this aſſertion, perhaps, upon a cloſer examination, may appear too bold and unjuſtifiable; ſomewhat like the poſition which has been advanced with regard to the ſentiments of the primitive writers, and practice of the primitive church. It might be proper to conſider, on this occaſion, 2 *Theſſ.* iii. 5. The Lord direct your hearts into the love of God, and patience of Chriſt. This you will allow to be a prayer of benediction. You will alſo obſerve, that here is particular mention of three perſons. The Lord, who is the object of the invocation, and beſtower of the bleſſing, is neither the Father, nor the Son. And who then can it be, but the Holy Ghoſt? whoſe amiable office it is, to ſhed abroad the love of God in our hearts *.—It

* Rom. v. 5.

will

will not, I presume, be intimated, that this is the only passage of the kind. For were it the only one, yet where the evidence is infallible, we need not the mouth of two or three witnesses to establish the matter in debate. However, for further satisfaction, we may consult 1 *Thess.* iii. 11, 12, 13. 2 *Thess.* ii. 16. If we consider these texts in conjunction with those scriptures which speak of the Holy Ghost as a distinct person, we shall perceive a beautiful propriety, and a particular emphasis, in understanding the verses as mentioning the sacred persons severally. The latter text especially, considered in this view, is extremely pertinent, has a very admirable propriety, and agreeably to a maxim laid down by a great master of correct writing:

Reddere personæ scit convenientia cuique.

Our Lord Jesus Christ himself, and God, and our Father, who hath loved us, and given us everlasting consolation, and good hope through grace, comfort your hearts, and establish you in every good word and work. Supposing the three persons implored in this supplication, every thing that is attributed to each, has a perfect conformity with that part, which each is represented as acting, in the blessed work of redemption; *e. g.* Our Father, who hath loved us; for God so loved the world, saith St *John*, that he gave his only-begotten Son. God, the Holy Ghost, who hath given us everlasting consolation; for it is the peculiar office of the blessed Spirit to administer comfort, called therefore the Paraclete. Jesus Christ, who hath given us good hope through grace; We have hope in Christ, saith the apostle to the *Corinthians;* and nothing is more frequently celebrated, by the apostolical writers, than the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ.—Behold then a pertinency, a beauty, a significant distinction, and an exact harmony between all the parts of this verse, if taken in our sense; but a strange, confused, tautological kind of diction, if you disallow, that the three divine persons are distinctly applied to.

Page

Page 6. it is suggested, "That we may incur the resentment of the other two persons, as shewing a neglect or disrespect to them, if, of our own heads, we should, in any peculiar and distinguishing form, worship the Father."—This, sure, is a most unworthy insinuation; as though the infinitely sublime and glorious persons of the Godhead were meanly ambitious, or weakly jealous. This is measuring the Deity, not by our reason, which is a very incompetent standard; not by our senses, which are still more inadequate judges; but even by our sordid and vile affections.—But not to insist upon this gross error; not to aggravate this affront offered to the adorable Trinity; this intimation, and others of the like strain, seem to be founded on a great mistake, with relation to the nature of the Godhead. The essence is one, though the persons are distinct. So that whatever honour is paid to any person, is paid to the one, undivided essence. If we call Jesus the Lord, St *Paul* assures us, it is to the glory of God the Father. Whoever sees the Son, our Saviour himself declares, sees the Father also. (*i. e.*) Whoever has a right understanding of the Son, and sees by faith his divine excellencies; that man sees, is acquainted with, the perfections of the Father also; and for this obvious reason, because the Father and Son are one. And will not this hold good with regard to the Holy Spirit?—If so, whatever honour is paid to one, is paid to all the three sacred persons: or rather whatever devout ascriptions of praise are addressed to either of the divine persons, they are addressed to the one living incomprehensible God.—I wish Mr *Tomkins* had attended to this consideration. It might have guarded him against some other unwary expressions, which imply the notion of Polytheism; particularly that in page 10. where he tells us, "That the scripture sets forth the Father and the Son as the objects of worship." I cannot find any such representation in scripture. The scripture is uniform, and

and consistent, and speaking of but one God, speaks of but one object of divine worship, *viz.* the infinite Deity distinguished by a threefold personality. This may seem strange; but since we have the Saviour's word, and the apostle's evidence, to support the tenet, it should, methinks, be admitted as true. This may seem strange, but is it therefore to be rejected as false? At this rate, we must deny the existence of a thousand phænomena in nature; we must explode as impossibilities numberless apparent facts.

Page 7. the inquirer advances a very unaccountable proposition. "It should seem," says he, "that the Son of God had quitted for that time (during his humiliation) his claim to divine worship; though it should be granted that he did receive divine worship before."—I must ask with the *Jewish* ruler, How can these things be? Can God abandon his Divinity? Can he cease to be supremely great and good? Is he not, I would not say by the necessity, but by the absolute perfection of his nature, to-day, and yesterday, and for ever the same? If so, it seems impossible, that creatures should, for so much as a single instant, be released from the duty of adoration; it seems impossible, with reverence be it spoken, that God should relinquish his claim to their profoundest homage. This would be to deny himself; which the apostle reckons among the αδυνατα, 2 *Tim.* ii. 13. νησασθαι εαυτον ȣ δυναται, ἀρ—This tenet, I imagine is contrary, not only to reason, but to scripture. I should be pleased to know, whether Mr *Tomkins*, when he was composing this paragraph, recollected that memorable saying of our Lord, *John* iii. 13. No man hath ascended into heaven, but he who came down from heaven, even the Son of man (ο ων, not ο ην, or ο εσομενος) who is in heaven. Is not this a manifest proof that our Saviour was in heaven by his divine nature, even while his human nature was sojourning on earth, or confined within the limits of a scanty apartment? And if the divine Son, while

 holding,

holding, in his humanity, a conference with *Nicodemus*, was present by his Godhead in the heavenly regions, could the angels be insensible of his presence? and if sensible of his presence, could they with-hold their adoration?—*Credat Judæus Apella, non ego.*—Let *Socinians*, and men that are called infidels, believe such an absurdity. I cannot reconcile it to my apprehensions.—Our Lord emptied himself, it is true; because, when he appeared among mortals, he appeared without the pomp and splendor of his celestial majesty. He suffered no such glory to irradiate and adorn his person, as surrounded him on the mount of transfiguration, and will invest him when he comes to judge the world; but was, in all things, such as we are, sin only excepted. Thus he humbled himself, not by disrobing his eternal Godhead of its essential dignity, but by with-holding the manifestations of it, in that inferior nature, which he was pleased to assume.

Page 8. our author seems to mistake the meaning of that royal edict, issued out in the heavenly world, 'Let all the angels of God worship him *. He supposes this was a command to worship the Son in the sublime capacity of God over all. This, surely, could not be the sense of the words. Because a command of such an import, must be needless. 'This was the natural, the unchangeable, the indispensable duty of all creatures; and such as those superior intelligences could not but easily discern, such as those upright spirits could not but readily obey, without any particular injunction. The command, therefore, I apprehend, is rather referable to the humanity of our blessed Redeemer; to that nature in *Immanuel*, which purged away our sins, by becoming a propitiatory sacrifice. This was made higher than the angels. This had an illustrious name given it, to which every knee should bow. This was exalted into heaven, angels, and authorities, and powers, being made subject unto the man Christ Jesus. If this remark be true, then our

* Heb. i. 6. author's

author's interpretation is erroneous; conſequently, his round-about argument, derived from a miſtaken principle, muſt fall to nothing.

Page 12. in the note our objector aſks, "Did the people of *Iſrael*, upon hearing theſe words, I am the Lord thy God, who brought thee out of the land of *Egypt*, ever imagine, that there were three perſons then ſpeaking?"—This queſtion, I ſuppoſe, is intended to invalidate the doctrine of the Trinity. But the great article ſtands upon a rock, too impenetrable to be undermined by ſuch an interrogatory, too immoveable to be ſhaken by ſuch a ſuggeſtion. I pretend not to give a categorical anſwer to the query; but only deſire to obſerve, that the people of *Iſrael* have ſeveral intimations, in their ſacred books, of a plurality of perſons in the unity of the divine eſſence. They were accuſtomed to hear *Moſes* ſpeak in the plural number, when he relates the wonderful work of creation, Let us make man. Their inſpired and royal preachers ſpoke of the almighty Maker of them, and of all things, in plural terms, Remember now thy Creator *, in the original Creators. The prophets acknowledged and teach this grand myſtery, particularly the evangelical prophet *Iſaiah*, chap. lxiii. 9, 10. So that, if the children of *Jacob* and *Joſeph* were ignorant of this awful truth, it ſeems owing rather to the blindneſs of their underſtandings, than to the want of proper diſcoveries from above.—But be the caſe, as it is ſuppoſed, with regard to the *Jews*. Are we obliged to copy their ignorance? Muſt their ſentiments be our guide? their imaginations the model of our creed? Surely, for a Chriſtian to argue, or even to ſurmiſe, that there is no ſuch thing, becauſe the ancient *Jews* were not acquainted with it, is altogether as unreaſonable, as it would be unphiloſophical to maintain, that there are no ſuch places as *America*, or *Greenland*, becauſe they were both unknown

* Eccl. xii. 1.

to the ancient inhabitants of *Canaan*.—Mr *Tomkins* cannot but know that it is the excellency of the evangelical dispensation, to take off the veil from the *Mosaical*. That we, by comparing their law with our gospel, by applying the interpretation of our apostles to the doctrines of their prophets, are able to see clearly what they perceived but dimly. Ye do always resist the Holy Ghost, says St *Stephen*, as your fathers did, so do ye *. If this reproof be compared with the several narratives, recorded in the Old Testament, concerning the stiff-necked and refractory behaviour of the *Jews*, we shall gather by the clearest deduction, that the Holy Ghost is Jehovah. Perhaps, the *Israelites*, when they heard the *Psalmist* playing upon his harp, and singing this congratulatory hymn of praise, Thou art ascended up on high, thou hast led captivity captive, and received gifts for men; yea, even for thy enemies, that the Lord God might dwell among them †;—the *Israelites*, I say, upon hearing these words, might not be aware, that the person who ascended up on high, was the blessed Jesus; and that the Lord God dwelling among, dwelling in depraved disobedient mortals, to renew and reclaim them, was the Holy Ghost. But we, by collating *Eph.* iv. 8. with the former part of the verse; and *John* xiv. 17. *Rom.* viii. 11. with the latter, are, to our exceeding great consolation, brought to the knowledge of these glorious doctrines.

Page 24. our author observes, "That Dr *Watts* would prove the propriety of paying divine worship to the Holy Ghost, from the form of administering baptism."—This argument he undertakes to invalidate. He proceeds in a very unexpected manner; springs a mine, of which we were not at all apprehensive. What if it should turn to the overthrow of his own tenet?—The Doctor maintains, "That baptism is a piece of worship." Our author replies, "That hearing the word, in the public assemblies, may also be reputed

* Acts vii. 51. † Psal. lxviii. 18.

puted a piece of worſhip."—May it ſo? Then *ex ore tuo*—Your own conceſſion confutes your opinion. For, if to hear the word with aſſiduity, with reverence, with an humble expectation of its becoming the inſtrument of our ſalvation;—if this be a ſpecies of worſhip, it is, doubtleſs, a worſhip paid to him, who is the author and giver of the word. Now, we are ſure, that it was the Holy Ghoſt, who ſpake by the prophets, who ſpake by the apoſtles, who ſpake all the words of that life, which, in our religious congregations, are explained and enforced.

Page 15. Mr *Tomkins* urges the expreſſion of St *Paul*, 1 *Cor.* x. 2. which I cannot forbear ſuſpecting, notwithſtanding all the remonſtrances of charity, which thinketh no evil, he wilfully miſunderſtands. It is evident, on the very firſt glance, that *Moſes*, in that place, cannot mean the man *Moſes;* but the ſyſtem of religion, the body of laws, moral, judicial, and ceremonial, which were, by him, delivered to the *Jews*. Is it therefore a proof, that to be baptized into the name of the Holy Ghoſt is no act of worſhip to that divine perſon, becauſe it was no act of worſhip to *Moſes*, to have been baptized into an œconomy inſtituted by God, and only promulged by *Moſes?*

For my part, I am ſtedfaſtly perſuaded, that to be baptized into the name of the Holy Ghoſt, is a very noble and ſublime kind of worſhip; not to ſay, an indiſpenſable obligation to all other inſtances and degrees of worſhip.—It is coupled with that greateſt of Chriſtian duties, believing. Which I take to be a worſhip of the mind, far more important than any bodily homage; without which, all external expreſſions of adoration are mere formality. He that believeth, and is baptized, ſhall be ſaved.—I verily think, no one will deny, that baptiſm is, at leaſt, equal in its import to circumciſion; inſtead of which it ſeems to be ſubſtituted. Now, circumciſion was evidently a token and ratification of the covenant of Jehovah. It was a viſible

a visible attestation to the person circumcised, that the Lord was his God, engaged by covenant to protect, bless, and make him finally happy. It was a solemn declaration of an absolute self-surrender to the blessed God, to acknowledge him for the only Lord, to serve him in all dutiful obedience, to seek his glory, and to be resigned to his will. This seems to have been the meaning of that divinely-appointed rite, emphatically expressed in those words of the *Jewish* legislator, Thou hast this day avouched the Lord to be thy God, to walk in his ways, and to keep his statutes, and to hearken unto his voice. And the Lord hath avouched thee this day to be his peculiar people *.—And can we imagine, that baptism, which has superseded circumcision, is inferior to it in significancy? Or can we imagine, that these solemn acts of recognizing the Lord for our only God, and consecrating ourselves to his honour, are no expressions of worship?

Though this dedication of ourselves to the service of the Holy Ghost should be implied in the ordinance of baptism, "still it must be granted," replies our author, "that this can be no other service of the Spirit, than what is enjoined in the New Testament," (page 15.)—Thereby insinuating, that it is somewhat different from the service we stand engaged to yield both to the Father and to the Son. But, according to all the allowed methods of speech, the baptized person is dedicated alike to each of the three sacred persons: he avows them all to be the object of his worship, and the author of his salvation. There is no manner of difference in the terms which specify the obligations; and since divine wisdom has made them the same, why should we presume to pronounce them diverse?—How unaccountably-strange would the baptismal form be, on our objector's interpretation; I baptize thee into an obligation to adore, to obey, to worship the Father and the Son; but not to pay the same reverential and devout

* Deut. xxvi. 17, 18.

devout regards to the Holy Ghoſt? What writer of ingenuity, in order to ſupport a ſingular hypotheſis, would do ſuch apparent violence to the meaning of the ſacred text? What reader of diſcernment would become a convert to an opinion, which muſt darken and pervert the moſt evident ſenſe of ſcripture, in order to acquire an air of plauſibility?—Suppoſe a perſon ſhould, in making his laſt will, expreſs himſelf in the following ſtyle: I conſtitute A, B, and C, my joint executors; I give and bequeath to them, whatever remains of my eſtate and goods, when my legacies are paid, and my debts cleared. Would it not be a moſt extravagant and unreaſonable pretence, if a captious neighbour ſhould maintain, that C is not veſted with an equal power, has not a right to an equal dividend with A and B? If a gentleman of the long robe ſhould offer to give this for law, would he not forfeit his character either of ſagacity or integrity?—If none of theſe obſervations will convince Mr *Tomkins*, that he has miſrepreſented the tenor and extent of the baptiſmal engagement, we will, in order to bring the matter, if poſſible, to an amicable accommodation, accede even to his own aſſertion. He argues, "That no other ſervice of the Spirit can be meant, but ſuch as is enjoined in the New Teſtament."—Agreed; let us join iſſue on this footing.—Let us reſt the cauſe on this bottom. As it is Mr *Tomkins*'s own motion, I hope, he will acquieſce in the reſult of ſuch a trial. Now, the New Teſtament, both virtually and explicitly, requires us to acknowledge the Holy Ghoſt to be God and Lord; and what ſervice is payable, according to the preſcriptions of the New Teſtament, to ſuch a Being? This, and no other, I would render myſelf; this, and no other is rendered by all the churches. I do not ſo much as attempt to be an advocate for any other worſhip to be addreſſed to the Divine Spirit, than what the evangelical ſcriptures direct us to offer unto that majeſtic and venerable, that tremendous and amiable name,

name, The Lord our God. If therefore the New Teſtament demands all honour and adoration, as the inviolable due of this moſt exalted Being, then Mr *Tomkins* muſt either flatly deny the divinity of the Holy Ghoſt, muſt contradict the expreſs declaration of the inſpired writers on this head, or elſe confeſs, that his notion ſtands condemned even on his own principles.

What is alleged from 1 *Cor.* i. 13. this ſeems to corroborate our ſentiments, rather than to ſupport his. St *Paul* aſks, with warmth, and a ſort of holy indignation—εις το ονομα Παυλου εβαπτισθητε; he ſpeaks of it as an abſurd and ſhocking thing. Now, what could render this ſo odious and monſtrous a practice; ſuch as the apoſtle diſclaims and rejects with abhorrence? Nothing, that I can apprehend, but the horrid evil it would imply. The evil of aſcribing divine honours to *Paul*, making *Paul* an object of worſhip, and conſecrating perſons to a creature, who ought to be conſecrated only to the Creator, God bleſſed for ever. So that I muſt declare, I think this text a ſtrong intimation, that baptiſm is really a ſacred ſervice or divine worſhip, which it is utterly unallowable for any creature to aſſume or admit. Therefore, the good apoſtle renounces it, with a noble kind of deteſtation; much like the angel, who, when *John* offered to fall at his feet, and do him homage, cries, Ορα μη τω Θεω προσκυνησον *.

The apoſtolical benediction is another paſſage uſually and deſervedly produced, in juſtification of our practice. Mr *Tomkins* alleges, "That this is very different from a direct addreſs by way of prayer to the Spirit," (page 17.)—It ſeems to me to be an undoubted prayer, and to have the very ſame force as if it had been expreſſed in the more common precatory form; O Lord Jeſus Chriſt, vouchſafe them thy grace; O God of goodneſs, grant them thy love; O eternal Spirit,

* Rev. xxii. 9.

Spirit, accompany them with thy comfortable presence. That this is the purport of the words, is undeniable; and where is the extraordinary difference, whether they be introduced by an *esto*, or a *fac*?—I believe, all will allow the form ordained by God (*Numb.* vi. 24, 25, 26.) for the use of the *Jewish* priests, was a real prayer: The Lord bless thee, and keep thee; the Lord make his face to shine upon thee, and be gracious unto thee; the Lord lift up the light of his countenance upon thee, and give thee peace! If this was an address to the Almighty, the apostolical benediction is exactly of the same nature. To say, that it was only a kind of wish, and not designed for a devout aspiration to Jehovah, must greatly debase and enervate it: not to hint, that this sacerdotal blessing contained a recognition of three divine persons, which might be obscure in that age, but has been fully illustrated by the apostles: not to hint, the great probability, that St *Paul* had this very passage in his eye, when he breathed out his benedictive prayer, and purposely intended to explain it in the evangelical sense.—Besides, I would desire to know, whether any minister could, with a safe conscience, use the following benediction? The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Virgin *Mary*, be with you all, amen! Why should a conscientious minister be afraid of using such a form, if it be no prayer? if it be not a virtual ascription of omniscience, omnipresence, and omnipotence to the Virgin, and, in consequence of those attributes, a supplicatory address to her?—Still we are encountered with another objection, "If I should say to a friend, May the good angels attend you; shall this be called a praying to the angels?"—Mr *Tomkins* himself must own, if he will deal fairly, that the case is by no means parallel. The elect angels disavow all divine worship, but does the Holy Ghost do this? The elect angels are ministering spirits, but of the Holy Ghost it is said,

The Lord is that Spirit. The angels are confeſſedly created and finite beings, ſo that it would be abſurdity and blaſphemy to invocate them; but the Holy Ghoſt is poſſeſſed of the perfections, performs the works, and is called by the incommunicable name of God, ſo that it is wiſdom and piety to pray to him. For which reaſons, I make no doubt, but that whenever the apoſtles put up ſuch an ejaculation, η κοινωνια του αγιου Πνευματος μετα παντων υμων, they accompanied it with a devout mental addreſs to the uncreated Spirit: becauſe it would be a piece of irreverence and of folly, barely to wiſh the mercy, and not apply to that ever-preſent Being for its accompliſhment.

As for the other arguments which Dr *Watts* advances, in order to vindicate the cuſtom of aſcribing praiſe to the Holy Ghoſt, *viz.* "That it may be expedient to practiſe it frequently in ſome churches, where it has been long uſed, leſt great offence ſhould be given."—That it may be proper to uſe it ſometimes, on purpoſe to hold forth the doctrine of the Trinity in times of error, and to take away all ſuſpicion of hereſy from the public worſhip."—Theſe conſiderations I leave to the Doctor. I have no inclination to try my ſkill at ſuch weapons, but chuſe to act with regard to them, as *David* acted in relation to *Saul*'s armour; becauſe, I really think, that they rather encumber than uphold the cauſe: They are ſo unwarily worded, that they repreſent the practice, not as a noble eſſential piece of divine worſhip, founded on the ſtrongeſt and moſt invariable principles, always ſuitable to our neceſſities, and always correſpondent to the nature of the bleſſed Spirit; but as an occaſional and time-ſerving expedient; to be uſed, not conſtantly, but now and then only; and that, to anſwer a turn, none of the moſt important, to avoid not any real deficiency in worſhip, but only a ſuſpicion of hereſy. Where-ever I am ſolicitous to ſecure the

the concluſion, I would by no means offer to deduce it from ſuch unſolid and precarious premiſes.

I have now examined the moſt conſiderable objections, urged by Mr *Tomkins*, againſt the unanimous practice of Chriſtian congregations whether they conform or diſſent. I ſhall only beg the continuance of your candour and patience, while I touch upon another particular or two, which may farther corroborate our cuſtom, and prove it to be ſomewhat more than warrantable.

Suppoſe we produce a command of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt; will this be ſufficient to aſcertain the practice? Does not our Saviour give this charge to his apoſtles? Pray ye the Lord of the harveſt, that he would ſend forth labourers into his harveſt *. Now, I would humbly aſk, Who the Lord of this ſpiritual harveſt is? Shall we refer ourſelves to ſcripture for ſatisfaction? Will Mr *Tomkins* abide by the determination of ſcripture? will he honeſtly acknowledge, that, if the ſcripture declares the Holy Ghoſt to be the Lord of the harveſt, we have then a clear commiſſion, a poſitive command, to addreſs ourſelves by way of prayer to the Holy Ghoſt?—It is the Holy Ghoſt who appoints the labourers that are to be employed in this harveſt: The Holy Ghoſt ſaid, Separate me *Barnabas* and *Saul*, for the work whereunto I have called them †. It is the Holy Ghoſt, who qualifies the workmen, that are to diſpatch this momentous buſineſs, with wiſdom, with knowledge, with utterance, and with all miraculous abilities, 1 *Cor.* xii. 8, 9, 10, 11. It is the Holy Ghoſt who makes theſe labours effectual, and crowns them with ample ſucceſs, *Acts* x. 44. 1 *Theſſ.* i. 5.—From theſe ſcriptures, and their teſtimonies concerning the bleſſed Spirit, it ſeems indiſputably plain, that he is Lord of the harveſt. Can we have a more forcible motive to pray unto him, than the conſideration of his ſuperintending, conducting,

* Matth. ix. 38. Luke x. 2. † Acts xiii. 2. & xx. 28.

and proſpering the progreſs of (that beſt of bleſſings) the everlaſting goſpel? Need we a better warrant to offer our devouteſt applications to him, than our Lord's expreſs injunction, viewed in connection with theſe remarkable texts?

Suppoſe I prove farther, that the heavenly beings pay divine worſhip to the Holy Ghoſt; ſuppoſe I ſhew you angels and archangels in poſtures of profound adoration at the throne of the eternal Spirit, and glorifying him in ſtrains of the moſt ſublime devotion. Will this be allowed a proper precedent for our practice? will any one be ſo bold as to affirm, that he is unfit to receive the worſhip of mortals on earth, if it appear that he is the object of angelical worſhip in the heaven of heavens? In the ſixth chapter of *Iſaiah*, we meet with one of the grandeſt repreſentations imaginable: Jehovah exhibits himſelf to the entranced prophet, ſeated on a lofty and auguſt throne; before him ſtood the immortal hoſts of ſeraphim; they veiled their faces in token of deepeſt ſelf-abaſement; they lifted up their voices with a rapturous fervour, and uttered this magnificent acclamation, Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hoſts; the whole earth is full of his glory. The triſagium of the ſeraphic armies ſeems to intimate, that they addreſſed their praiſes to the one Jehovah in a trinity of perſons. If you look forward to verſe 8. you will find another circumſtance confirming this remark; for the glorious Majeſty ſpeaks of himſelf, in the plural number, Who will go for us? But the proof I chiefly depend on, the proof which is abſolutely inconteſtable; which none can deny, without ſuppoſing themſelves better judges of the ſenſe of ſcripture, than the apoſtles; this proof is found in *Acts* xxviii. 25. where St *Paul* evidently applies the words, ſpoke by this majeſtic and divine Being, to the Holy Ghoſt, Well ſpake the Holy Ghoſt, ſaying. And if he attributes the words to this ſacred perſon, who dares ſeparate the honours? Since all muſt allow

allow, that the perſon who gives the commiſſion to the prophet, and the perſon whom the celeſtial legions adore, is one and the ſame.—Since therefore the angels addreſs the Holy Ghoſt with ſolemn acts of praiſe; ſince they bear united teſtimony, that the whole earth is full of his glory; Mr *Tomkins* ſhould conſider whether he acts a becoming part, in endeavouring to exclude his glory from any Chriſtian congregation by his example, and from every Chriſtian congregation by his writings.

If Mr *Tomkins* ſhould ſtill think his own opinion ſufficient to over-rule all theſe allegations of ſcripture, of greater weight than the practice of St *Paul* to the *Theſſalonians;* more unexceptionable, and fitter to be admitted as our pattern, than the example of the angelic hoſt; I cannot but imagine, that the propriety of our cuſtom is apparent even on the tenor of his own favourite notions. Page 12. he quotes that grand and fundamental law of revealed religion, "Thou ſhalt worſhip the Lord thy God, and him only ſhalt thou ſerve." He proceeds to conſider, who this Lord our God is, whom we are to ſerve. He then informs us, "It appears from the whole current of ſcripture, in the New Teſtament, as well as the Old, that it is he, who, in times paſt, ſpake unto the Fathers by the prophets." Rightly judged. We make no appeal from this verdict, but acquieſce in it, though it is his own. Only taking along with us St *Peter*'s declaration, Prophecy came not in old time (rather, at any time, *unquam*, not *olim*, ποτε, not παλαι) by the will of man, but holy men of God ſpake, as they were moved by the Holy Ghoſt *. Mr *Tomkins* himſelf maintains, that the genuine and undoubted object of divine worſhip, is that infinitely wiſe and gracious Being, who ſpake to our Fathers by the prophets; and St *Peter*, in the moſt expreſs manner poſſible, aſſerts, that this infinitely

* 2 Pet. i. 21.

ly wiſe and gracious Being, who ſpake by the prophets, is the Holy Ghoſt. Can demonſtration itſelf be plainer? Sure, then, Mr *Tomkins* muſt either retract his poſition, or diſallow the apoſtle's application of it, or elſe give us leave to adhere inviolably to our practice, and to look upon it as juſtifiable beyond all reaſonable exception, and, what ſhould carry ſome peculiar weight with our author, juſtifiable on principles of his own.

May I urge this point a little farther?—I ſhould be glad to know, what is the ſcriptural meaning of being converted unto the Lord? Is it not, to renounce every lying vanity, to forſake every evil way, and turn to the Lord with all our heart? that we may fear him, love him, put our whole truſt in him, and ſerve him truly all the days of our life. Does not this include ſome, rather is it not comprehenſive of all worſhip? So that if it is certain from ſcripture, that ſinners are to be converted to the Holy Ghoſt; then it is equally certain, that ſinners are to pay not ſome only, but all worſhip, to that bleſſed Being, who is the centre of their ſouls, and the ſource of their happineſs. Be pleaſed to read attentively 2 *Cor.* iii. 16, 17. and we dare venture to ſtand by your deciſion.

Let me add one more conſideration, and I have done.—The bleſſed Spirit is to help our infirmities in prayer, *Rom.* viii. 26. The Spirit is to ſubdue our iniquities, and mortify the deeds of the body, *Rom.* viii. 13. The Spirit is to ſhed abroad the love of God in our hearts, *Rom.* v. 5. The Spirit is to ſanctify us wholly, in all our faculties, 1 *Theſſ.* v. 23. The Spirit is to transform us into the divine image, 2 *Cor.* iii. 18. The Spirit is to ſeal us unto the day of redemption, *Eph.* iv. 30. and to be the earneſt of an incorruptible inheritance, *Eph.* i. 14. In a word, from the Spirit we are humbly to expect all the fruits of goodneſs, righteouſneſs, and truth, *Eph.* v. 9.—Now, what a comfortable proſpect riſes before us, if this Spirit be the all-ſufficient, the infinite God, to whom nothing

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is impoſſible; who is able to do for us exceedingly abundantly even above all that we can aſk or think! But how languid muſt be our hopes, how ſcanty our expectations, if he be not the divine Being, but only ſome finite exiſtence! And, in another ſtate of things, to whom will righteous ſouls acknowledge themſelves inexpreſſibly indebted, to whom will they return their ardent thanks, and addreſs the moſt joyful praiſes, but to the author of all theſe ineſtimable bleſſings? If this then is likely to be the employ and the delight of heaven, ſhould it not be begun on earth?

Upon the whole; Since the cuſtom of offering prayer, and addreſſing praiſe, to the Holy Ghoſt, is contrary to no text of ſcripture, is founded upon his divine nature, and reſults from the indiſpenſable obligation of creatures to worſhip the Godhead: Since it was undeniably the practice of the Chriſtian church, in its pureſt days, and has been received, by unanimous approbation, for many hundreds of preceding years:—Since it is probable, if we will allow their doctrines and conduct to be conſiſtent, it is certain, if we will prefer the moſt accurate and unembarraſſed interpretation of their epiſtles, that the apoſtles uſed this method of worſhip:—Since the analogy of the whole ſcripture juſtifies it, and the innumerable benefits, which are communicated to us from the bleſſed Spirit, demand it:—Since angels aſcribe glory to his awful Majeſty, and our Saviour directs us to put up prayers to his almighty goodneſs:—Theſe, and other conſiderations, determine me to join, without the leaſt ſcruple, with full aſſurance of its propriety, in that ancient noble doxology.—Glory be to the Father, who hath loved us with an everlaſting love,—and to the Son, who hath waſhed us from our ſins in his own blood,—and to the Holy Ghoſt, who applies theſe bleſſings of redeeming grace to our corrupt hearts; to this great, eternal incomprehenſible Trinity be rendered undivided honours, and immortal praiſe!

Having

Having been so very prolix already, I shall not render myself more tedious by making any apology, but shall only add, what no consideration can induce me to omit, that I am, dear Sir,

Your obliged friend, *&c.*

LETTER XXVIII.

Dear Sir, *Weston-Favell, March,* 1745-6.

YOU have set me a task, which I should be glad to execute, if I was able. God forbid, that I should be backward to plead for the interests of that Redeemer on earth, who, I trust, is making perpetual intercession for me in heaven. But my fear is, lest the noble cause should suffer, by the unskilfulness of its defendant. It is for this reason, purely for this reason, I wish to decline accepting the challenge you seem to give me in your letter. For this once, however, I will enter the lists, and venture to try the strength, not of your arm, but of your arguments.

I do not wonder, that you have objections to make against Christianity. I know some eminent Christians who were formerly warm and zealous in the opposition: yet they have frankly owned that their minds were then either very inconsiderate, or else immersed in other speculation, and that they had no leisure, or no inclination to weigh the evidences, and examine the nature of the evangelical doctrine. Since they have applied themselves to consider these points, with a seriousness and attention, becoming an inquiry of the last importance; an inquiry, in which their very souls and all their eternal interests were embarked, they are thoroughly convinced, that their former sentiments were wrong. They are fully persuaded, that the gospel-institution is of divine extract; that it is a system, noble and sublime, benevolent and gracious, every way suitable to the majesty of God, and admirably calculated

calculated for the comfort, the improvement, and the happineſs of mankind.

Methinks you will reply, and very reaſonably, "that "all ſuch ſhould be able to account for the change "of their opinions."—I dare ſay they can. But as you call upon me ſo particularly to vindicate the religious principles, which I have from my fancy embraced; I will now attempt to vindicate them from the various charges, of which they ſtand arraigned in your letter.

Be pleaſed then, dear Sir, to obſerve, that the Chriſtian doctrine teaches, that when God brought man into being, he bleſſed him with a ſtate perfectly holy and happy. If you read the Bible, the authentic narrative of our fall, as well as the only guide to our recovery, you will find it an avowed truth, That God made man upright. If, therefore, man corrupted himſelf, and (as it is impoſſible to bring a clean thing out of an unclean) polluted his offspring; where is the harſhneſs, where the injuſtice of the divine procedure in adjudging him worthy of death? Let God be juſtified, and let mortals bear the blame.

You think it very odd, that this tragical cataſtrophe ſhould be occaſioned by eating an apple.—So ſhould I too, was there nothing more in the caſe, than barely eating an apple. But this was a wilful and preſumptuous breach of a moſt poſitive command, of the only command, which the almighty Lawgiver enjoined. And the ſmaller the matter of the prohibition, the more inexcuſable was the fault of not complying with it. In this act of diſobedience was implied, the moſt perverſe diſcontent in the happieſt circumſtances imaginable; the moſt ſhameful ingratitude for the moſt ineſtimable favours; pride and arrogance, even to an unſufferable degree; implicit blaſphemy, making God a liar, and hearkening to the ſuggeſtions of the devil, in preference to the ſolemn declarations of truth itſelf. Indeed, this tranſgreſſion was a complication of ini-

quities; and, tho' repreſented under the extenuating terms of eating an apple, was really the moſt horrid provocation that was ever committed.

But that the tranſgreſſion of *Adam* ſhould faſten guilt, or tranſmit corruption to his lateſt poſterity, this, you imagine, is all a chimera.—If then you was created in a perfect ſtate; if you ſuffered nothing by the original lapſe, why is your heart prone to numberleſs evils? why do you tread in the ſteps of an apoſtate anceſtor? why do you violate the law of an infinitely-pure God, and too often delight in that abominable and accurſed thing which he hateth, ſin? You are too honeſt and ingenuous to deny the truth of theſe expoſtulations. And if ſo, you muſt allow, that your nature was depraved in *Adam*, or, which ſeems to be more culpable, that you have corrupted yourſelf. Then, there is no ſuch great cauſe to find fault with the ſupreme Diſpoſer of things, for including you in *Adam*'s treſpaſs, ſince you yourſelf do the ſame things.

Is it conſiſtent, you aſk, with the character of an infinitely-good Being, to make this reſolve, That he would, on account of this ſingle crime, bring into exiſtence almoſt innumerable millions of creatures, ſo ſpoiled by himſelf, that they ſhould all deſerve eternal damnation?—I anſwer, This is entirely a miſrepreſentation of the Chriſtian ſcheme. It was not in conſequence of the original crime, that God determined to bring the human race into being; but in purſuance of his own eternal purpoſes, which are always the iſſue of conſummate wiſdom, of unbounded benevolence, and will, unleſs his creatures ſtubbornly reject the overtures of his love, terminate in their unſpeakable felicity.—Neither was the human race ſpoiled by the Creator, but by themſelves.—To ſuppoſe, that the Author of all excellence ſhould deprave the work of his own hands, is doubtleſs a ſhocking thought, and ſuch as we utterly diſavow. So far was he from being

ing the sole operator, that he was not so much as accessary in any degree to their misery: but warned them of their danger; charged them to beware; and planted the barrier of his own tremendous threatenings between them and ruin.

You are displeased, that everlasting happiness should never be attainable by any of these creatures, but by those few to whom God gives his effectual free grace. —If the proposition be set in another light, which is really the true method of stating it; if we say, That, tho' all have forfeited, yet all may recover everlasting happiness, because effectual grace is freely offered to all; what can a man of candour object to such a dispensation? Will he not acknowledge the goodness of the divine procedure, and inveigh against the perverseness of mortals; the most unreasonable perverseness of all those, who are too proud to be sensible of their want of grace, or too careless to trouble their heads about it? Will he not be constrained to declare them suicides, and that they are chargeable, if they perish, with their own destruction? If we prescribe a medicine of sovereign efficacy, and the sick is so self-willed as to refuse the recipe, who is to be blamed, in case of a miscarriage, the physician or the patient?

When therefore you talk of persons being unavoidably damned, you quite misconceive the tenor of our most merciful and benign institution; which offers forgiveness to all, tho' ever so profligate, thro' the Saviour's atonement; which makes a tender of grace to all, tho' ever so abandoned, thro' the Saviour's mediation. The language, the most compassionate language of which, is, Turn ye, turn ye from your evil ways, for why will you die? And because the sinner, enslaved to vice, is unable to shake off the fetters, it farther says, Ask, and ye shall receive; seek, and ye shall find, grace sufficient for you.

As to the meaning of the term *grace*, I apprehend,

it ſignifies the pardon of obnoxious, and the acceptance of unworthy perſons, on account of the expiation and merits of their Redeemer. It imports alſo a communication of knowledge and ſtrength to ignorant and impotent creatures, that they may diſcern their Creator's will, and diſcerning, may be enabled to perform it. And in forming theſe ideas, I can ſee nothing ſtupid; in expecting theſe bleſſings, nothing fooliſh.

But ſtill, perhaps, you think it ſcarce reconcileable with the wiſdom, the juſtice, the mercy of God, to ſuffer mankind to fall. That he foreſaw it, and could have prevented it, is undeniable. He foreſaw it, or elſe he could not be omniſcient: he was able to have prevented it, otherwiſe he could not be omnipotent. —But what if the eternal Maker knew, that this would give occaſion to the moſt ample and glorious manifeſtation of thoſe very attributes, which you ſuſpect are eclipſed hereby? Would this conciliate your approbation? would this incline you to acquieſce in the œconomy of the goſpel?

Certainly it is a moſt ſtupendous diſcovery of wiſdom, to find out a method whereby the ſeemingly-jarring attributes of juſtice and mercy may be reconciled;—whereby the ſinner may be ſaved, without any injury to the inviolable holineſs of his laws, or any derogation to the honour of his juſt and righteous government. It was impoſſible to give ſuch an amazing proof of his infinite kindneſs for poor mortals, as by delivering his own Son to take their inferior nature, and bear all their guilt. Nor can there be ſo ſignal an exertion of juſtice, as to puniſh this moſt excellent perſon, when he ſtood in the place of offenders; or of mercy, as to divert the vengeance from their obnoxious to his immaculate and innocent head.

As from the ſcheme of redemption, the higheſt glory redounds to the divine Majeſty, ſo the richeſt conſolation is derived from hence to frail creatures.

The

The happineſs of men conſiſts in the favour of God. His love is better than life. To be graciouſly regarded by that adorable Being, who ſtretched out the heavens, and laid the foundations of the earth; to be the objects of his complacency, whoſe ſmile conſtitutes heaven, and whoſe frown is worſe than deſtruction;—this, this is human felicity. And how could God almighty give us a brighter evidence, a more pregnant proof of his inconceivably-tender concern for us, than by ſurrendering his only Son to condemnation and death for our ſake? Tranſporting thought! big with a delight, which man could never have known, had not *Adam* fallen. This obviates an objection, on which you ſtrongly inſiſt, That you and others never conſented to make *Adam* your repreſentative. For if this method of ordering things be productive of a ſuperior felicity to all that are willing to be happy, then it can be no wrong to the world in general, or to any individual perſon in particular. No more than it is a wrong to the minor, for his guardians to procure intereſt for his money, and improve his eſtate, againſt the time of his coming to age.

Upon the whole; There is no reaſon to quarrel with that ſovereign will of God, which permitted us to fall in *Adam*, from thence to contract guilt, to derive pollution, and conſequently, to deſerve damnation. But rather there is abundant cauſe to admire, to adore, to bleſs his holy name, for providing a Redeemer; a Redeemer of unknown dignity, and unutterable perfections; a Redeemer, by whom all the evils of the fall may be more than redreſſed; a Redeemer, in whom all the awful and amiable attributes of the Deity are moſt illuſtriouſly diſplayed; a Redeemer, through whom the moſt wicked and moſt unfortunate of our race may find mercy, and arrive at happineſs; a Redeemer, who moſt compaſſionately invites all, all that are weary and heavy laden, to come

to

to him, and moſt aſſuredly declares, that whoſoever believeth in him, ſhall not periſh, but have everlaſting life.—And is it not ſtrange,—very ſtrange,—hardly credible, ſure, that any ſhould reject ſo great ſalvation, and chuſe death rather than life?

Let me beg of you, Sir, to conſider theſe points with calmneſs and impartiality. You cannot but be ſenſible, that many learned, many wiſe, many excellent perſons, moſt cordially believe them; receive their chief ſatisfaction from them; and would rather die, than renounce them.—Since it is poſſible, at leaſt, that they may be in the right; ſince you do not pretend to be infallible in your judgment; and ſince you acknowledge a God of unerring wiſdom, and everlaſting goodneſs, let me beſeech you to implore his guidance in your ſearch, and his direction in your determination. For I am not aſhamed to own, or rather I am bold to maintain, that this wiſdom cometh from above; this wiſdom is the gift of God; and prayer is altogether as neceſſary to its attainment, as ſagacity of mind, or the accompliſhments of learning.

LETTER XXIX.

Dear Sir, *Weſton-Favell*, *April* 1. 1746.

IF you can ſpare the *Night-Thoughts*, the bearer of this ticket will bring them ſafely to *Weſton*. I propoſe to read them, when buſineſs is done, and the day is fled; ſo that the time may correſpond with the ſubject.

I hope, the bookſeller has, before this time, waited on you with the little volume, which deſires your acceptance. Was it to paſs through my hands before it was preſented, I ſhould almoſt be induced to inſcribe it with that pretty line in *Virgil*,

Munera parva quidem, at magnum teſtantur amorem.

Pray,

Pray, do you think that paſſage, *Luke* vi. 38. δωσουσιν εις τον κολπον υμων, is rightly rendered by our tranſlators, Shall men give into your boſom? Is the idea of men neceſſarily implied in the original? Or can fact and experience juſtify the tranſlators in giving this ſenſe to the original? God, and conſcience, and a future ſtate will amply recompenſe the beneficent; but whether men, the generality of men in this world are thus generous and grateful, ſeems to be a point that wants confirmation. This remark was ſuggeſted in peruſing the place, but I ſubmit it to your judgment, and remain, Dear Sir, *&c.*

LETTER XXX.

Dear Sir, *Weſton-Favell, Nov.* 1. 1746.

THis morning I received your favour. The day lours, and threatens rain, which debars me from the pleaſure of paying you my thanks in perſon.

Mr *Huygens* I hope to read very carefully. But, I believe, it will be proper to take heed of adopting into my plan any notions that are difficult and abſtruſe. I would have every thing ſo perſpicuous, that the dimmeſt underſtanding may apprehend my meaning; ſo obvious, that he who runs, may read —Let me lay before you a little ſketch of my deſign, with a requeſt, that you would alter the general order, and make retrenchments, or additions of particular incidents, as you ſhall think moſt expedient.

A contemplative walk.—The approach of evening, and gradual extinction of light.—The advantages of ſolitude.—The ſtillneſs of the univerſe.—The coolneſs of the atmoſphere.—Darkneſs, and its uſefulneſs to mankind.—Sleep, and its beneficial effects —Dreams, and their extravagance.—A glow-worm glimmering. —An owl ſhrieking.—A nightingale ſinging.—The very different circumſtances of mankind; ſome revelling and carouſing; ſome agonizing and dying.—

A

A knell ſounding.—The notion of ghoſts walking.—The moon, with its various appearances, and ſerviceableneſs, to our globe,—the heavenly bodies,—their number,—ſize,—courſes,—diſtances,—diſplay many of the glorious attributes of their Creator,—ſome of which are ſpecified.—They teach nothing of redemption,—this the peculiar prerogative of revelation.—Chriſt the day-ſtar from on high, that points out, and makes clear the way of ſalvation.

Theſe are ſome of the ſubjects which, I imagined, might be admitted into the compoſition of a Night-piece. If others occur to your mind more pleaſing, or more ſtriking, be pleaſed to ſuggeſt them.

I am glad to find by the quotation from Mr *Locke*, that your eſteem and veneration for the ſcriptures are on the increaſing hand. May we be perſuaded, ever more and more, of the incomparable excellency of thoſe ſacred volumes. This one conſideration, that they are the book of God, is a higher recommendation of them, than could be diſplayed in ten thouſand panegyric orations. For my part, I purpoſe to addict myſelf with more inceſſant aſſiduity to this delightful and divine ſtudy. Away, my *Homer;* I have no more need of being entertained by you, ſince *Job* and the prophets furniſh me with images much more magnificent, and leſſons infinitely more important. Away, my *Horace;* nor ſhall I ſuffer any loſs by your abſence, while the ſweet ſinger of *Iſrael* tunes his lyre, and charms me with the fineſt flights of fancy, and inſpirits me with the nobleſt ſtrains of devotion. And even my prime favourite, my *Virgil*, may withdraw; ſince in *Iſaiah* I enjoy all his majeſty of ſentiment, all his correctneſs of judgment, all his beautiful propriety of diction, and—But I muſt have done. The meſſenger waits; he can ſtay no longer, than barely to allow me leiſure to ſubſcribe myſelf, Dear Sir, *&c.*

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LETTER XXXI.

Dear Sir, *Weſton-Favell, Nov.* 22. 1746.

AS I cannot attend the infirmary this day, permit me to take this opportunity of acknowledging the favour of your laſt.

The ſermon you was pleaſed to lend me, I admire. Chriſt the great propitiation is, with me, a moſt favourite ſubject; and, I think, the author has been ſo happy as to treat it in a clear, nervous, pathetic manner.—I am delighted with his reply, and rejoice to obſerve, that it has paſſed a ſecond edition. I hope the antidote will operate, and ſpread as wide as the poiſon.—This writer has another recommendation. His conciſeneſs, added to perſpicuity, renders his arguments eaſy to be apprehended, and not difficult to be remembered.—I am ſo much charmed with his performance, that I beg leave to keep it a few days longer; and ſhould take it as a favour, if, in the mean time, you would give the bookſeller an order to ſend for one of the ſermons for me.

I heartily applaud the zeal you ſhew for the ſpiritual welfare of the patients. The infirmary would be an ineſtimable bleſſing, if, by the grace of God, it might be productive of a reformation in the perſons whom it admits and diſcharges. As diſtreſſed objects will in all probability reſort to it from all parts of the county, a change wrought in their hearts, and a renewal begun in their lives, might be a happy means of diffuſing religion far and near.—I hope the clergy concerned in the management of the infirmary will, with delight and aſſiduity, concur in the proſecution of ſo deſirable an end. I can promiſe for one, ſo far as God ſhall give him ability.—I wiſh ſome proper ſcheme were contrived for the execution of this deſign, in which I might bear ſome little part, without giving umbrage to my brethren, or alarming their jealouſy. —I have ſometimes thought of offering to give the

patients a kind of lecture or exhortation once a-week, formed upon ſome or other of thoſe ſcriptures, which are the ſtanding memento's of their wards *. But, ſometimes doubtful whether ſuch a propoſal would meet with acceptance, ſometimes checked by the infirmities of my conſtitution, I have hitherto neglected to mention the affair; however, I now venture to ſubmit it to your conſideration. To this, or any other more adviſeable method, I ſhould very readily contribute the beſt of my aſſiſtance.

"Are you inclined, dear Sir, to give the poor creatures all the inſtruction in the Chriſtian religion you are capable of?"—We take you at your word; and henceforward look upon you as an aſſociate in our great work. In a warfare of ſuch unſpeakable importance, we are glad to ſtrengthen our force by the acceſſion of every ally; much more of ſuch an auxiliary, as will be regarded by the patients with an uncommon degree of attention and pleaſure. Nor can I think it any wiſe inconſiſtent with the office of a phyſician, or any derogation from the dignity of his character, to feel the pulſe of the ſoul, to examine into the ſymptoms of ſpiritual maladies, to aſk exploring queſtions concerning the habit of the mind, and preſcribe accordingly, either for the purging off the peccant humours of vice, or corroborating the relaxed powers of grace.

May that infinitely condeſcending and compaſſionate Being, who diſdained not in his own ſacred perſon to take our ſickneſſes, and bear our infirmities, both direct your counſels, and proſper your endeavours, in this momentous affair.

I purpoſe to wait upon you ſome afternoon in the next week, and cannot think of a more agreeable topic of converſation, than that of concerting meaſures for

* Texts of ſcripture in the *Northampton*, *Wincheſter*, and ſeveral other infirmaries, are written on the walls, and conſequently are very uſeful, if ſeriouſly reflected on.

for the proper exertion of this labour of love, and encouraging each other to abound in the work of the Lord. I am, Dear Sir, *&c. &c.*

LETTER XXXII.

Dear Sir, *Weſton-Favell, Nov.* 29. 1746.

HAving taken cold, and got a hoarſeneſs, I am afraid to venture abroad; leſt I ſhould loſe my voice, and be incapable of performing the duty of the morrow.

If any method is agreed upon by the committee for endeavouring, in ſome more effectual a manner, to promote the ſpiritual recovery, and everlaſting welfare of the infirmary-patients, I wiſh you would be ſo kind as to inform me of it, in a letter: that if any part of this generous undertaking ſhould fall to my ſhare, I may addreſs myſelf to the proſecution of it, with all the ability which the divine goodneſs ſhall vouchſafe to communicate. Or, if there be no need of my concurrence, that I may accompany it with my beſt wiſhes, and, at leaſt, further it with my prayers;

Who am, *&c.*

LETTER XXXIII.

My dear friend,

YOUR laſt found me on the recovering hand, getting ſtrength and ſpirits, though by ſlow degrees.

Soon after I received your favour, a meſſenger came from *London*, bringing us the alarming news, that my youngeſt brother was extremely ill. My father's bowels yearned, and his heart bled; but the infirmities of age, and an unwieldy conſtitution, hindered him from taking the journey. Upon me, therefore,

the office fell. Feeble and languid as I was, there was no rejecting such a call. Accordingly, I took coach, and in two days arrived safe at *London;* where I found my poor brother (the packer) seized with a most violent fever. He was attended by two eminent physicians; but they proved vain helpers, and miserable comforters. For a considerable time, his stout constitution struggled with the disease, but at last was forced to yield, was forced to drop in the dreadful combat. After attending his sick-bed for several days, I had the melancholy task of closing his dear eyes, and resigning him up to death.

Oh! the uncertainty of mortal things! What is health, but a glimmering taper, that expires while it shines; and is liable to be extinguished by every motion of the air? What is strength, but a tender blossom, that is often withered in its fullest bloom; often blasted, even before it is blown?—Who could have thought, that I should survive my brother, and follow him to the grave? I sickly and enervated, he always lively and vigorous. In flourishing circumstances, and blessed with prosperity in his business; but now removed to the dark, inactive, silent tomb. Lately married to a beautiful and blooming bride; but now everlastingly divorced, and a companion for creeping things.

Scarce was I returned to *Weston*, but another awful providence fetched me from home: My very worthy physician, Dr *Stonhouse*, who lives and practises at *Northampton*, had the misfortune to lose an amiable and excellent wife. She also was snatched away in the morning of life (aged 25,) and dead, before I so much as heard of her being disordered. At this valuable friend's house, I was desired to abide some time, in order to assist in writing letters for him, and dispatching his necessary affairs; in comforting him concerning the diseased; and (if the will of God be so) in endeavouring to improve the awakening visitation to our mutual good.

You

You will surely say, when you read this account, that I have been in deaths oft. Once upon the borders of it myself, and more than once a spectator of its victory over others.—However, my dear friends, let us not be dismayed. Let no man's, at least no believer's heart fail, because of this king of terrors. Tho' thousands fall beside us, tho' ten thousands expire at our right hand, and though we ourselves must quickly give up the ghost; yet the word is gone out of our great Redeemer's mouth, and it shall not return unfulfilled, I will swallow up death in victory He shall stand at the latter day upon the earth; he shall say to the grave, Give up; and to the sea, Keep not back; release my sons from your dark confinement, and restore my daughters to their everlasting Father's arms. —Then shall we lead him captive, whose captives we were, and triumph eternally over this last enemy. In the mean time, let us lay all our help, all our guilt, upon the divine Author of our faith, and Captain of our salvation. So shall we no longer be in bondage, thro' fear of death; but, with the saints of old, overcome through the blood of the Lamb; overcome the dread, even while we sink beneath the stroke of this our mortal foe.

What I wrote concerning a firm faith in God's most precious promises, and an humble trust, that we are the objects of his tender love, is what I desire to feel, rather than what I actually experience. Considerations they are, with which I would ply my own heart, in hopes that they may be effectually set home by divine grace, in hopes that they may become the happy means of making me strong in faith, and enabling me thereby to give glory to God.

Your remarks on this important point are exceedingly judicious, and perfectly right. After which, it will be insignificant to my friend, and look like arrogance in his correspondent, to add, that they exactly co-incide with my sentiments.

I do not doubt, but there are many dear children of the bleſſed God, who are in a much better condition, with regard to his favour, than they can eaſily be perſuaded to believe. Many ſincerely righteous, for whom light is ſown; many true hearted, for whom joyful gladneſs is prepared: which, tho' latent in the furrows of inward tribulation, or oppreſſed under the clods of miſgiving fears, ſhall, in another world, ſpring up with infinite increaſe, and yield an everlaſting harveſt.

That humble hope, mixed with trembling, you have very pathetically deſcribed, in the breathings of a renewed ſoul, panting after God; languiſhing for the tokens of his love; ardently deſiring the final enjoyment of him in his heavenly kingdom; and relying wholly on the meritorious paſſion, pleading nothing but the perfect righteouſneſs of Jeſus Chriſt.—Happy, without all peradventure, happy the heart, in which ſuch affections habitually prevail. They are the beginning of heaven, and will certainly be completed in glory. They conſtitute a ſignal part of that meetneſs for the inheritance of ſaints in light, concerning which the apoſtle ſpeaks, and which is one of the ſureſt evidences of our deſignation to that purchaſed poſſeſſion. Chriſt will in no wiſe, on no conſideration of paſt provocation, or preſent corruption, either for weakneſs of faith, or want of confidence, caſt out ſuch a one. Let not ſuch a one queſtion, but he who has begun the good work, will accompliſh it even unto the end.

We ſhould, however, as you moſt pertinently obſerve, lament all the remains of unbelief, as a miſery; repent of them, as a ſin; and labour to obtain a more aſſured faith, both as our duty, and our felicity.—The direction for prayer, you know, is, that we draw near in full aſſurance of faith; and, Whatſoever things ye aſk in prayer, believe that ye receive them, and ye ſhall have them.—The *Theſſalonians* are commended for receiving the goſpel, with much aſſurance of faith.

Receiving

Receiving the gospel.—What is meant by that expression? believing, that the apostles were no impostors; that Jesus Christ was the true Messiah; and that his doctrine came from heaven?—This, and abundantly more. I apprehend, it implies,—That Christ died, not for sins only in general, but for their sins in particular; that he bore all their iniquities, in his own bleeding body, and agonizing soul, on the cursed tree; that, all their crimes being fully expiated, the most rigorous justice would not demand a double payment for the same debt; and consequently, that there remained no condemnation for them.—This is the glad tidings, which they not only attended to, and credited with a speculative assent; but with a personal application of it, each to his particular case. And why should not we do the very same?—I shall only subjoin further on this head, what I take to be a very clear and accurate explanation of the apostle's celebrated definition of faith.—Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen; putting us into a kind of present possession of the promises, and setting divine truths before the mind in all the light and power of demonstration. For this beautiful illustration of the inspired writer, I am obliged to an excellent clergyman of this neighbourhood; who lately favoured us with an admirable visitation-sermon, and, for the good of the public, was prevailed on to print it.—You will give me leave to close the topic with a distinction, which I have somewhere read, or on some occasion heard: A distinction, which, I think, properly adjusts the case under consideration; and settles it, neither on a precarious, nor a discouraging issue.—Many have the faith which bringeth salvation, who have not that faith which produceth assurance; but none have the former, who do not aspire after, and endeavour to possess the latter.

On the whole, I heartily beseech the adorable and infinitely-gracious Giver of every perfect gift, to establish,

bliſh, ſtrengthen, ſettle us in the faith of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt: that he would fulfil in us all the good pleaſure of his will, and the work of faith with power. And, I dare ſay, we ſhall often lift up our hearts to our heavenly Father, and breathe out that ardent petition, Lord, I believe; help thou mine unbelief!—If we have ſuch frequent recourſe to the overflowing and inexhauſtible Fountain of all good; if we add to our prayers meditation on the merits of Jeſus, and on the ſure word of promiſe; our faith will grow; the grain of muſtard-ſeed will be quickened, and ſhoot up into a tree; the little drop will become a ſtream, and the ſtream ſpread into a river. The waters that iſſued from the ſanctuary were, at firſt, deep to the ancles only; then they aroſe to the knees; ſoon they reached the loins; and were afterwards waters to ſwim in.

The *Contemplations* you are pleaſed to inquire after, are, after long delays, or a very ſlow procedure of the preſs, launched into the world. What may be their fate, I dare not conjecture. Whether, by the general diſapprobation, they may be unfortunately becalmed; or, by the ſeverity of critics, may ſplit on the rocks of cenſure; or, foundering through their own unworthineſs, may ſink in oblivion; or, bleſſed by a gracious providence, may gain the haven of public acceptance, and import thoſe moſt valuable commodities, pleaſure, which improves, and improvement, which delights. When they reach your parts, be ſo good, dear Sir, as to peruſe them, firſt with the humble child-like ſpirit of a Chriſtian, who ſeeks religious advantage in all that he reads. Next, with the candid rigour of a friend, ſaying, as you proceed, Here his thoughts are redundant, and want the pruning-knife; there they are deficient, and call for the grafter's hand; here the language is obſcure, and perſpicuity is the only remedy; there it is inexpreſſive, and muſt be rendered more nervous, in order to reach the judgment, or ſtrike the paſſions.—Above all, let me beg

of

of you to implore a bleſſing from the moſt high God, both upon the author and his piece; that the one may be a monument of divine mercy, the other a poliſhed ſhaft in the great *Immanuel*'s quiver.

Should not a ſenſe of his love make us more ardently deſirous of bringing others to partake of that everlaſting bliſs, which we humbly expect as our final portion; and of which ſome foretaſtes have been indulged, even in our preſent ſtate? Should we not be ſtirred up, with greater aſſiduity and love, to warn every man, and exhort every man, that they alſo may be preſented perfect in Chriſt, and live for ever in the light of his countenance?—The book I mentioned formerly and took leave to recommend, ſhall be ſent. I have ſet it apart as a preſent for my dear friend; and whether my life be prolonged, or my death haſtened, neither of theſe circumſtances ſhall make any alteration in my deſign. Only let me deſire you, in your next, to give me once more the proper directions for conveying it to you. For, ſome way or other, in my late unſettled ſtate, I have miſlaid your letter. Pleaſe to preſent my thanks to Mrs *** for her kind wiſhes; and tell her, that they are, and ſhall be moſt cordially returned by her and your moſt faithful and affectionate friend, *&c.*

LETTER XXXIV.

Dear Sir, *Weſton-Favell, Feb.* 28. 1747.

I Have read the ingenious gentleman's letter attentively. Tho' he ſays the ſtrongeſt things that can be urged upon the point, I ſtill adhere to my ſentiments; and not becauſe they are mine, but the ſcriptures, and ſupportable. I am perſuaded by a variety of texts from the oracles of truth.—I beg leave to wave the proſecution of the controverſy. Controverſy is what I naturally diſlike, and what I have ſeldom found advantageous. I know his opinion, and he has

given me an opportunity of declaring mine; and would only add, that if in any thing we be otherwiſe minded (than is conſiſtent with the goſpel of grace,) God, (upon a diligent application to his word, and humble prayer for the teaching of his Spirit,) will reveal this unto us. *Phil.* iii. 15.

I have been reading Mr *Baxter*'s *Saints Everlaſting Reſt*, and admire the copiouſneſs, the juſtneſs, and the devotion of his thoughts. How happy the ſoul, that while reading them can make them his own! May this be always the prevailing deſire; and, in due time, the heaven-vouchſafed portion of the worthy owner of the book, and of his

Moſt affectionate friend, *&c.*

LETTER XXXV.

Dear Sir, *Weſton-Favell, Feb.* 1747.

I Have heard nothing from my printer, during all this interval. What can be the reaſon of his long ſilence, and great negligence, I cannot imagine. But this week it occurred to my mind, that if he delays the ſecond edition at this rate, I may poſſibly be able to prepare the third letter to accompany it. Accordingly I have poſtponed other buſineſs, and applied wholly to this work. I have tranſcribed ſome part of the intended piece, and ſend it for your peruſal. Pray be ſo good as to examine it narrowly, and favour me with your remarks and improvements, on a ſeparate paper. There are, I fear, beſides more material faults, ſeveral miſtakes in the copy, owing to my want of leiſure to review it. I ſuppoſe, the remainder of my deſign, when completed, will conſiſt of about the ſame number of pages.

If I live till *Monday*, I propoſe to viſit my patient at the infirmary; and, if company happens to be agreeable, will take the pleaſure of ſpending an hour with a valuable and very much eſteemed friend at *Northampton*.

ampton. If you are not able to guess the person I mean, you shall soon be informed by, dear Sir, yours, *&c.*

Vir bonus et prudens versus reprehendet inertes,
Culpabit duros, incomptis allinet atrum
Transverso calamo signum, ambitiosa recidet
Ornamenta, parum claris lucem dare coget,
Arguet ambigue dictum, mutando notabit. HOR.

This I transcribe, not to inform you of the critic's office, but only to apprize you of what I wish, and what I humbly request.

LETTER XXXVI.

Dear Sir, *Weston-Favell, April,* 12. 1747.

I Have folded down a corner of the leaf at the place where your perusal left off. There is a note or two subjoined to the preceding pages, which I wish you would please to examine. My humble service to Dr ****. I desire he will write his remarks and corrections on a separate paper. What think you of the following lines for a motto?

Night opes the noblest scenes, and sheds an awe,
Which gives those venerable scenes full weight,
And deep impression on th' intender'd heart.
Night-Thoughts.

——— *Si quid novisti rectius istis,*
Candidus imperti.

Your plan for forming a Christian society, and regulating our interviews, I greatly approve. It seems to me to be complete. I see nothing that should be taken from it, nor can think of any thing to be added to it. I heartily wish to have it carried into execution, and hope it will be productive of considerable comfort and advantage to the members; and not to them only, but, by rendering them more useful in their respective stations, to many others.

A cold, and hoarseness on my voice, make me

ſomewhat fearful of coming to —— this day.—I hope you have peruſed the remainder of the manuſcript; and cannot but wiſh, you would give the whole a ſecond reading. The unknown importance of what we print, inclines me to urge this requeſt. Who can tell how long it may continue, and into what hands it may come? I almoſt tremble at ſuch a thought, leſt I ſhould write unadviſedly with my pen? and injure, inſtead of ſerving, the beſt of cauſes.

If you have put my little piece into the hands of my *Ariſtarchus*, Dr —— I mean, deſire him to be particularly attentive to the redundancies, and lop them off with a plentiful hand.

I ſhall ſoon create you a ſecond taſk, by tranſmitting for your correction, twenty folio pages of remarks on the ſtars, and ſerious improvements.—Yours, &c.

LETTER XXXVII.

My dear Friend, Weſton-Favell, June, 27. 1747.

COming home this evening, I could not forbear muſing on the various topics, which furniſhed matter for our diſcourſe; and now I am all thoughtful and retired, I cannot forbear taking notice of ſome particulars relating to our converſation. To be ſilent in ſuch a caſe, would, I am perſuaded, be more diſpleaſing to a gentleman of your diſcernment and generoſity, than to uſe the utmoſt freedom of ſpeech.

Was it you, dear Sir, or I, that when a certain paſſage in ſcripture happened to be mentioned, treated it, not indeed with a contemptuous diſdain, but with too ludicrous an air? deſcanted on it, in a ſportive and frolicſome manner, in order to create a little pleaſantry. If I was the perſon that indulged this improper levity, I beſeech you to rebuke me, and ſeverely too. Though my deſign might be innocent, my conduct was apparently wrong That infinitely precious and important book, ſhould be always held in the higheſt

higheſt veneration. Whatever the divine Spirit vouchſafes to dictate, ſhould be thought and ſpoke of by mortals, with gratitude, dutifulneſs, and awe. It is the character of a religious man, that he trembles at God's word; and it is ſaid of the great Jehovah, that he has magnified his name and his word, above all things.

Who was it, dear Sir, that lent to our valuable friend that vile book, *Le Sopha*, and yet wrote by *Crebillon*, with an enchanting ſpirit of elegance; which muſt render the miſchief palatable, and the bane even delicious? I wonder, that your kind and benevolent heart could recommend arſenic for a regale. It puts me in mind of the empoiſoned ſhirt preſented to *Hercules*. I am ſure you did not think on it, or elſe you would no more have tranſmitted ſuch a peſtilent treatiſe to the peruſal of a friend, than you would tranſmit to him a packet of goods from a country depopulated by the plague. If that polluting *French* book ſtill remains in your ſtudy, let me beg of you to make it perform quarantaine in the flames.

The laſt particular relates to attendance on the public worſhip of God. Let us not neglect the aſſembling ourſelves together. This was the advice of the beſt and greateſt caſuiſt in the world; not to ſay, the injunction of the Maker of all things, and Judge of all men.—Would we be aſſured of our love to God? This is one evidence of that moſt noble and happy temper; Lord, I have loved the habitation of thy houſe, and the place where thy honour dwelleth.—Would we glorify the Lord? Then let us appear in his courts, fall low on our knees before his footſtool, and in this public manner avow him for our God, recognize him for our King, and acknowledge him to be our ſupreme good.—Would we follow the example of our devout and bleſſed Maſter? Let us remember how it is written, Jeſus went into the ſynagogue, as his cuſtom was. And, if we take due care to get our hearts prepared,

prepared, by a little previous meditation, and earneſt prayer, I dare anſwer for it, our attendance will not be in vain in the Lord. God will, according to his promiſe, meet us in his ordinances; make us joyful in his houſe of prayer; and we ſhall experience what, (if I remember aright) that brighteſt ornament of the court of judicature, Judge *Hales* declared, That he never ſat under the preaching even of the meaneſt ſermon, but he found ſome word of edification, exhortation, or comfort.

Dear Sir, beſtow a thought on theſe things. If the remonſtrances are wrong, I willingly retract them; if right, you will not pronounce me impertinent. Love and friendſhip dictate what I write; and the only end I have in view is the holineſs, the uſefulneſs, the happineſs, the final ſalvation of my much eſteemed friend. It is for this, this only I have now taken my pen in hand, and for this I ſhall often bend my knees before God, and thereby prove myſelf to be, Dear Sir, *&c.*

LETTER XXXVIII.

Dear Sir, *Weſton-Favell, July* 18. 1747.

I Deſire you to accept my thanks for the variety of beautiful lines, which you ſent me, to chuſe a motto from. They are all elegant, but not ſufficiently expreſſive of the deſign of the piece. Therefore I imagined the following quotation from Dr *Young*, ſomewhat more ſuitable;

Night is fair virtue's immemorial friend;
The conſcious moon, thro' ev'ry diſtant age,
Has held a lamp to wiſdom.

You adviſed me to add a ſort of note to the paſſage objected to by Mr ****, relating to the ſpark's being viſible. In purſuance of your direction, I ſubjoined the following:

"I beg leave to inform the young gentleman, whoſe name

name dignifies my dedication, that this was a remark of his worthy father, when we rode together, and converſed in a duſky evening. I mention this circumſtance, partly to ſecure the paragraph from contempt, partly to give him, and the world, an idea of that eminently-ſerious taſte, which diſtinguiſhed my worthy friend. The leſs obvious the reflection, the more clearly it diſcovers a turn of mind remarkably ſpiritual, which would ſuffer nothing to eſcape without yielding ſome ſpiritual improvement. And the meaner the incident, the more admirable was that fertility of imagination, which could deduce the nobleſt truths from the moſt trivial occurrences!"

Will not this be looked upon as a ſly underhand artifice, whereby the author extols himſelf?

Does the famous *Dutch* philoſopher, *Newentit* (I think is his name) treat of the heavenly bodies? If he does, be ſo good, in caſe he dwells in your ſtudy, to ſend him on a week's viſit to me. Dr *Watts*'s *Treatiſe on aſtronomy*, I ſhould be glad to peruſe.

The *Hymn to the moon*, whoever is meant by *Scriblerus Decimus Maximus*, is very poetical. I durſt not venture to add what is wanting to render it a complete addreſs, leſt it ſhould become like the viſionary image, whoſe head was of gold, his feet of iron and clay.

My tranſient remarks on Dr *Rymer*'s *Repreſentation of revealed religion*, are loſt. I muſt deſire leave to poſtpone my obſervations on the other books.

I am, dear Sir, *&c.*

LETTER XXXIX.

Dear Sir, *Weſton-Favell*, *Aug.* 8. 1747.

AFter my thanks for what paſſed in yeſterday's interview, give me leave to add my acknowledgments for the peruſal of your poem, entitled, *The Deity*. It is a noble piece, quite poetical, truly evangelical

gelical, and admirably fitted to alarm and comfort the heart, to delight and improve the reader. I muſt deſire to read it again.

I viſited the poor condemned malefactor, found him an ignorant perſon; aimed chiefly at theſe two grand points, to convince him of the hainouſneſs of his ſin, and ſhew him the all-ſufficiency of the Saviour, to obtain pardon even for the very vileſt of offenders. To preach and teach Jeſus Chriſt, is our office; to make the doctrine effectual, God's great prerogative. Nothing more occurs, but that I am, *&c.*

LETTER XL.

Deareſt Mr **, *Weſton-Favell, Aug.* 8. 1747.

I Ought to take ſhame to myſelf, for ſuffering ſo kind a letter, received from ſo valuable a friend, to remain ſo long unanſwereed. Upon no other conſideration, than that of my enfeebled and languiſhing conſtitution, can I excuſe myſelf, or hope for your pardon. My health is continually upon the decline, and the ſprings of life are all relaxing. Mine age is departing, and removing from me as a ſhepherd's tent. Medicine is baffled; and my phyſician Dr *Stonhouſe*, who is a dear friend to his patient, and a lover of the Lord Jeſus, pities, but cannot ſuccour me. This bleſſing, however, together with a multitude of others, the divine goodneſs vouchſafes, to gild the gloom of decaying nature, That I am racked with no pain, and enjoy the free undiſturbed exerciſe of my underſtanding.

I am much obliged to you for carrying my meſſage to the abbey with ſo much ſpeed, and conveying to me, with equal diſpatch, a ſatisfactory anſwer. When you viſit the worthy family again, be pleaſed, after preſenting my affectionate compliments, and moſt cordial

cordial good wishes, to inform Mrs ***, that the piece is sent to the press, and after some corrections made in the dedication, addressed to my godson. It is my humble request to him, and my earnest prayer to God, that he may regard it, not merely as a complimentary form, but as the serious and pathetic advice of his father's intimate acquaintance, and his soul's sincere friend; who, in all probability, will be cut off from every other opportunity of fulfilling his sacred engagements, and admonishing him of whatever a Christian ought to know and believe to his soul's health.

I forgot, whether I told you, that the last work will be divided into two parts; will be full as large as the two first letters; and therefore the whole will be disposed into two small pocket-volumes, on a very neat paper, with an elegant type, in duodecimo. But a convenient number of the new essays will be printed in the octavo size and character, for the satisfaction of those who purchased the former edition, and may possibly be willing to complete their book.—It was a considerable time, before I could think of a title for the last pieces, that suited their nature, and expressed their design. At length, I have determined to style them, *Contemplations on the night*, and *Contemplations on the starry heavens*.

Now I apprehend myself to be near the close of life, and stand, as it were, on the brink of the grave, with eternity full in my view, perhaps, my dear friend would be willing to know my sentiments of things in this awful situation. At such a juncture, the mind is most unprejudised, and the judgment not so liable to be dazzled by the glitter of worldly objects.

I think then, dear Sir, that we are extremely mistaken, and sustain a mighty loss in our most important interests, by reading so much, and praying so little. Was I to enjoy *Hezekiah*'s grant, and have fifteen years added to my life, I would be much more frequent in

my applications to the throne of grace. I have read of a perſon, who was often retired and on his knees, was remarkable for his frequency and fervency in devotion; being aſked the reaſon of this ſo ſingular a behaviour, he replied, Becauſe I am ſenſible I muſt die. I aſſure you, dear Mr ***, I feel the weight of this anſwer, I ſee the wiſdom of this procedure; and, was my ſpan to be lengthened, would endeavour always to remember the one, and daily to imitate the other.

I think alſo, we fail in our duty, and thwart our comfort, by ſtudying God's holy word no more. I have, for my part, been too fond of reading every thing elegant and valuable, that has been penned in our own language; and been particularly charmed with the hiſtorians, orators, and poets of antiquity. But was I to renew my ſtudies, I would take my leave of thoſe accompliſhed trifles. I would reſign the delights of modern wit, amuſement, and eloquence, and devote my attention to the ſcriptures of truth. I would ſit with much greater aſſiduity, at my divine Maſter's feet, and deſire to know nothing but Jeſus Chriſt, and him crucified. This wiſdom, whoſe fruits are peace in life, conſolation in death, and everlaſting ſalvation after death; this I would trace, this I would ſeek, this I would explore, through the ſpacious and delightful fields of the Old and New Teſtament. In ſhort, I would adapt the apoſtle's reſolution, and give myſelf * (προσκαρτερειν) to prayer, and to the word.

With regard to my public miniſtry, my chief aim ſhould be, to beget in my people's minds a deep ſenſe of their depraved, guilty, undone condition; and a clear believing conviction of the all-ſufficiency of Chriſt, by his blood, his righteouſneſs, his interceſſion, and his Spirit to ſave them to the uttermoſt. I would always obſerve, to labour for them in my cloſet, as well as in the pulpit; and wreſtle in ſecret ſupplication, as well as to exert myſelf in public preaching, for their ſpiritual

* Acts vi. 4.

ritual and eternal welfare. For unleſs God take this work into his own hand, what mortal is ſufficient for theſe things?

Now, perhaps, if you ſat at my right hand, you would aſk, What is my hope with regard to my future and immortal ſtate? Truly, my hope, my whole hope, is even in the Lord Redeemer. Should the king of terrors threaten, I fly to the wounds of the ſlaughtered Lamb, as the trembling dove to the clefts of the rock. Should Satan accuſe, I plead the Surety of the covenant, who took my guilt upon himſelf, and bore my ſins in his own body on the tree. Should the law denounce a curſe, I appeal to him who hung on the accurſed tree, on purpoſe that all the nations of the earth might be bleſſed. Should hell open its jaws, and demand its prey, I look up to that gracious Being, who ſays, Deliver him from going down into the pit, for I have found a ranſom. Should it be ſaid, No unclean thing can enter into heaven; my anſwer is, The blood of Chriſt cleanſeth from all ſin; tho' my ſins be as ſcarlet, thro' this blood they ſhall be as white as ſnow. Should it be added, None can ſit down at the ſupper of the Lamb, without a wedding-garment, and your righteouſneſſes, what are they before the pure law, and piercing eye of God, but filthy rags? Theſe I renounce, and ſeek to be found in Chriſt Jeſus, who is the Lord my righteouſneſs. It is written in the word that is to judge the world at the laſt day, By his obedience ſhall many be made righteous.

So that Jeſus, the dear and adorable Jeſus, is all my truſt. His merits are my ſtaff, when I paſs through the valley of the ſhadow of death. His merits are my anchor, when I launch into the boundleſs ocean of eternity. His merits are the only riches which my poor ſoul, when ſtript of its body, deſires to carry into the inviſible world. If the God of glory pleaſes to take notice of any mean endeavours to honour his holy name, it will be infinite condeſcenſion and grace;

but his Son, his righteous and suffering Son, is all my hope, and all my salvation. Dear Sir, pray for me, that the weaker I grow in body, the stronger I may become in this precious faith. May the choicest blessings attend you and yours. A letter would revive yours, *&c.*

P. S. "Tho' the days are come upon me, in which "I have reason to say of worldly things, I have no "pleasure in them; yet I find a secret satisfaction in "this consideration, that to you, my dear friend, and "to others of my candid acquaintance, I may be per-"mitted, even when dead, to speak in my little trea-"tises. May they, when the author is gone hence, "never to be seen in these regions below, Oh! may "they testify with some small degree of efficacy, con-"cerning Jesus, that just one; may they fan the flame "of love to his person, and strengthen the principle of "faith in his merits!—Once more, dear Sir, adieu."

LETTER XLI.

Dear Sir, *Weston-Favell, Aug.* 22. 1747.

HAving read Dr *Middleton*'s introductory discourse, I hardly know what to think of his bold assertion, That all the miracles supposed to be wrought after the apostolic age, are absurd and fictitious. I must suspend my opinion concerning this point, till I find it either confirmed by the silence, or confuted by the arguments, of the advocates for ecclesiastical antiquity. In the main, I approve of his design, which is to settle the proofs of our holy religion on the basis of the inspired writings, and to deduce its doctrines from the same sacred source. The scriptures, as our friend *H*— beautifully expresses himself, are the armoury of God, from whence we may draw weapons of a divine temper, wherewith to engage all that oppose the truth, or hold the same in unrighteousness.

Does not this ingenious writer bear a little too hard upon

upon the religious character, and exemplary behaviour, of the primitive fathers? I cannot but think, they had, at leaſt in this reſpect, a very evident ſuperiority over moſt of their ſucceſſors.—How flowing, perſpicuous, and elegant is the doctor's ſtyle; and how ſtiff, obſcure, and bombaſt the language of the archdeacon? I dare ſay, you could not forbear ſmiling at his,—blazing out moſt faſtidious hypercritics; reproaching (not virulently, but) tartly; laſhing (not ſeverely, but) ſuperciliouſly; and penetrating the very vitals of the dead languages.

If your *Matho* is not lent out of town, I wiſh you would be ſo good as to ſend for it, and favour me with a ſight of it by the bearer. The reaſon of my requeſting this is, that Mr —— informs me by my brother, if he has not the laſt piece by the middle of next week, his preſs muſt ſtand ſtill. And methinks, I would gladly peruſe *Matho*, before I ſuffer my laſt eſſay to depart.—When can you afford me your converſation for an hour or two, in order to examine Mr ——'s remarks, and beſtow the finiſhing touches on the piece? Shall I wait upon you on *Monday* morning early?—When this buſineſs is diſpatched, your book, and my thanks, ſhall be returned together.

Yours, *&c.*

LETTER XLII.

Dear Sir, *Weſton-Favell, Octob.* 31. 1747.

With thanks I return Colonel *Gardiner*'s life. The worthy author has preſented me with a copy, which, I hope, will ſerve to humble and animate me, ſo long as I live.

Abernethy on the *Divine Attributes*, I will ſoon reſtore. In the mean time, ſhall I beg the favour of borrowing *Pliny*'s *Natural Hiſtory*?

You remember, who is to call upon you (*Deo volente*) on *Monday* morning. I muſt devote the greateſt part

part of this day to prepare my tranſlatory quota of *Dickſon's Therapeutica Sacra*.—The thoughts of our little ſociety bring to my mind a pleaſing circumſtance, which I obſerved, when we were at our laſt interview. My very valuable friend Dr *S*—— told a ſtory, in which he had occaſion to refer to ſome prophane and execrable language. Inſtead of defiling his lips with a repetition of the helliſh jargon, he was ſo truly diſcreet, as only to mention it under the general title of *horrid oaths*. A delicacy this, which I thought highly becoming both the Chriſtian and the gentleman.—I have ſometimes took the freedom, to obſerve, in the moſt reſpectful manner, upon ſome little inadvertencies in my worthy friend's conduct: but now it is with the higheſt pleaſure that I congratulate him, upon a moſt amiable piece of religious decorum, introduced into his diſcourſe.—I am, *&c.*

LETTER XLIII.

Dear Sir, *Weſton-Favell, Dec.* 2. 1747.

THE ſurpriſe which your letter gives me, is inexpreſſible, and the grief equal. I will haſten, as ſoon as poſſible, to my worthy and afflicted friend. O! that I could bring with me ſome healing balm for his wounded heart! It would be no ſmall alleviation of my own ſorrows, if I might be inſtrumental to make his leſs.—A long-continued cold, and an unexpected journey, have unfitted me from following your preſcriptions. I am obliged to your candour for aſcribing my neglect to this cauſe, and not to any diſregard of your advice. For I am perſuaded,

——*Si qua potuiſſent Pergama* dextra
Defendi, etiam hac defenſa fuiſſent.

I will ſtay the meſſenger no longer; and, I hope, I ſhall not ſtay long before I ſet out myſelf. It is owing wholly to an accident, that I do not accompany the

the bearer, with a view, and a hope of adminiſtering ſome conſolation to Dr *S*——. —I am, *&c.*

LETTER XLIV.

Dear and worthy Sir, *Northampton*, *Dec.* 5. 1747.

YOU will wonder to ſee a name which you have but lately known, at the bottom of this paper. But how,—oh! how will you be ſurpriſed, how grieved, to read the occaſion?—It is ſo afflicting, almoſt ſo inſupportable to our valuable friend,—that he is unable to give you the narrative; therefore has committed the office (*triſte miniſterium!*) to my pen.—And muſt I tell you? can you bear to hear it?—Mrs *S*—— is dead! that amiable and excellent lady is dead.—She was ſafely delivered of a daughter, the very day on which Dr *S*—— wrote to you laſt; was as well as could be expected or wiſhed on *Sunday* morning; and departed this life on *Tueſday* evening.—On *Sunday* in the evening our common friend perceived her to be attended with ſome alarming, and, as he apprehended, fatal ſymptoms.—Dr *K*— was immediately ſent for, who gave ſome encouragement. On *Monday* came Dr *J*— through a very deep ſnow, and moſt terrible weather, but urged by friendſhip and compaſſion. The moment that ſagacious practitioner beheld her, he confirmed Dr *S*—'s firſt ſentiments, that the caſe was irrecoverable; and added, that the great change was at the very door, and would probably take place in twenty-four hours; which came to paſs accordingly.

Your own tender and ſenſible heart will naturally conclude Dr *S*— is ſo oppreſſed with ſorrow, as not to be capable, at preſent, of anſwering his moſt valued correſpondents:

Curæ leves loquuntur, ingentes ſtupent.

But he intends, when time has ſomewhat alleviated his grief; and religion has more reconciled him to the awful

awful dispensation, to make a particular reply to the whole of your epistolary favour. You will, I do not question, recommend our distressed friend to the Father of mercies, and the God of all comfort. May we all lay this awakening stroke of Providence to heart, and give all diligence to have our sins pardoned thro' redeeming blood, our souls renewed by sanctifying grace; that whether we live, we may live unto the Lord; or whether we die, we may die unto the Lord; so that living or dying, we may be the Lord's.

The second edition of my *Meditations*, with the addition of another volume, is at last published. I have given directions to my bookseller, to send you a copy; and beg of you to accept it, as a small, but the most speaking and eloquent expression I am able to form of that great, that growing esteem I have conceived for Dr *Swan*, ever since our first interview at *Weston*. Be pleased, dear Sir, to read it with the utmost, or rather with your own candour; and sometimes dart up a short petition for the author, that, whatever is the fate of his book, himself may live over his writings, and be, what he describes.—I am, &c.

The End of the FIFTH VOLUME.

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